



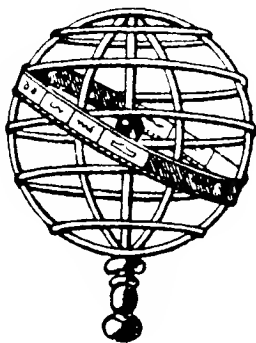
# SPORTING TALES

MRS EDWARD KENNARD



W. H. White & Co. London.

# Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library



Lovett Crusoe Collection

EMORY UNIVERSITY

**N K,**

lon.

TS, repayable

um monthly

osit, and allow

T Y.

Y

AND —

Manager.

**PLEASE OBSERVE**  
the **EEs**  
in  
**STEEDMAN'S**  
**SOOTHING**  
**POWDERS**  
for Children cutting **TEETH**.  
**WALWORTH, Surrey.**

**RELIEVE FEVERISH HEAT.**  
Prevent Fits, Convulsions &c.  
Preserve  
a Healthy State of the Constitution  
during the period of **TEETHING**.

**IN USE**  
**OVER FIFTY YEARS**

# MELLIN'S FOOD

FOR INFANTS & INVALIDS.



"12, Rushey Green, Catford,

"London, S.E., Oct. 3, 1893.

"Dear Sir,—I have great pleasure to enclose a photograph of my boy, Allan Edward, aged 16 months, who from six weeks old was entirely fed upon your Food. The child is very healthy, has had no illness whatever, and I think can fairly be considered a recommendation to your most excellent preparation.

"Yours faithfully,

"EDWARD McKENZIE."

## MELLIN'S FOOD FOR TRAVELLERS

Is sold at all SPIERS & POND'S Refreshment Rooms. This preparation may be taken with milk or with the addition of wine or spirit with the greatest benefit. For athletics it is of the highest value and as a sustaining diet after exhaustive physical exercise it has no equal.

SAMPLES, PAMPHLET & PROSPECTUS POST FREE ON APPLICATION TO  
**MELLIN'S FOOD WORKS, Stafford Street, PECKHAM, S.E.**

## NATURAL MINERAL WATERS

— OF —

### CARLSBAD

Are used in the treatment of Diseases of the Liver, when patients are unable to visit the Spa.

**T**HE NATURAL CARLSBAD SPRUDEL SALT is an efficient diuretic, but as an aperient it should be taken before breakfast, in doses of one to two teaspoonfuls dissolved in water, preferably warm.

### VICHY

#### STATE SPRINGS.

"GRANDE GRILLE."—For Affections of the Liver, Biliary Organs, &c.

"CELESTINS."—For the Kidneys, Gravel, Gout, Rheumatism, Diabetes, &c.

"HOPITAL."—For Stomach Complaints

SOLE AGENTS—

**INGRAM & ROYLE, Ltd., 52, Farringdon St. London, E.C.**

19, SOUTH JOHN ST., LIVERPOOL, & 80, REDCLIFF ST., BRISTOL.

And of all Chemists, Grocers, Stores, &c. Pamphlet Free on application.

# WHELPTON'S PILLS,

THE BEST FAMILY MEDICINE,

Are one of those pure Medicines which for their extraordinary properties have gained an almost

**UNIVERSAL REPUTATION.**

RECOMMENDED FOR

**HEADACHE, BILE, INDIGESTION, and OBSTINATE CONSTIPATION; also in RHEUMATISM and all SKIN DISEASES.**



ESTABLISHED  
1835.

**WHELPTON'S PILLS AND OINTMENT.**

## WHELPTON'S HEALING OINTMENT

The best remedy for

**Burns, Scalds, Ulcers, and all Skin Diseases.**

7½d., 1s. 1½d., and 2s. 9d. of all Chemists.

Free by post in the United Kingdom for 8, 14, or 33 Stamps

**PROPRIETORS:**

**G WHELPTON & SON, 3, CRANE COURT, FLEET ST.,  
LONDON. E C 4279**

**BROWN & POLSON'S**  
**Patent**  
**— OUR BEST QUALITY —**  
**CORN FLOUR**



*A New Preparation of  
Brown & Polson's Corn Flour  
For Home Baking.*

**MAKES BREAD DIGESTIBLE  
EVEN WHEN NEW.**

Write for a Sample, mentioning this Paper to them,  
at 23, Queen Victoria Street, London, E C

## HOME BAKING A PLEASURE—HOW? TRY IT FREE.

Messrs. BROWN & POLSON, of Corn Flour fame, have produced a Flour for home baking which they have called PAISLEY FLOUR, and which requires no addition of yeast or other raising agent. For Scones, Tea-Cakes, Pastry, &c., the new PAISLEY FLOUR is entirely successful if a little of it be mixed with ordinary flour. The peculiar advantage is that the process of raising is greatly assisted and simplified, and there is no uncertainty or disappointment as to the result. Bread so made is improved in flavour and easily digested even when new. A sample, with some useful recipes, will be sent gratis and post free to every reader who names 'White's Novels.' Write to BROWN & POLSON, 99 Queen Victoria St. London, E.C.

# SPORTING TALES.



# SPORTING TALES.

BY

MRS EDWARD KENNARD,

AUTHOR OF

“THE GIRL IN THE BROWN HABIT,” “WEDDED TO SPORT,”

“THAT PRETTY LITTLE HORSEBREAKER,” &c., &c.

*SECOND EDITION.*

LONDON :

F. V. WHITE & CO.,

14, BEDFORD STREET, STRAND, W.C.

1896.



PRINTED BY  
KELLY AND CO. LIMITED, 182, 183 AND 184, HIGH HOLBORN, W.C.  
AND KINGSTON-ON-THAMES.

## CONTENTS.



THAT BRUTE OF A MARE . . . . .	1
A DAY WITH THE DEVON AND SOMERSET STAGHOUNDS	31
RUN TO GROUND . . . . .	63
HOW I BROKE MY NOSE . . . . .	93
GAME UNTIL DEATH . . . . .	112
THAT YANKEE CHAP . . . . .	130
IN A NORWEGIAN VALLEY . . . . .	165
"THE YOUNG 'UN" . . . . .	190
HER FIRST SALMON . . . . .	240
A MEMORABLE RUN . . . . .	253



# SPORTING TALES.



## SPORTING TALES.

---

### THAT BRUTE OF A MARE.

I THINK that, without exception, she was the biggest brute I ever rode in my life.

When a man is as poor as a rat, of course he can't afford to be very particular as to his cattle, and my top price for a hunter never exceeded fifty guineas. I frequented Tattersall's on pouring wet days, when no sensible person was likely to venture out of doors, or else when some big race meeting was on, calculated to thin the attendance. But generally the "gees" there, went for too much money, and in an ordinary way I picked my Leicestershire flyers up at Aldridge's, although I sometimes patronised the London Horse Repository, if a country dealer was sending a job lot of animals to the hammer.

Occasionally my purchases turned out trumps, but I am bound to confess that

such luck was the exception rather than the rule. There was nearly always an "if" or "but" about them, and not infrequently half-a-dozen. Roughly speaking, I may say that I was accustomed to brutes in every shape and form, but the mare in question had certainly borne away the prize from all those I had hitherto bestridden.

When I bought her for thirty-three golden sovereigns, one snowy December at Aldridge's, I really thought that for once I had made an extraordinary bargain. She was a regular beauty to look at, and as far as appearances went, might easily have represented three hundred guineas. In fact I have seen many a less taking animal at the price, for well-to-do sportsmen often pay for character rather than symmetry. However, to go back to my mare. She was a bright bay in colour, and even at a time of the year when most horses' coats are not seen to advantage, hers shone like satin. She stood close upon sixteen hands high, and had a grand shoulder, a well set-on head and neck, legs as clean and cool as a two-year-old's, and quarters fit to carry a ton.

I only ride twelve stone in full hunting kit, although I measure six feet without my boots, but nature has been kind enough to endow me with a spare person, which enables me to set Banting at defiance. Nevertheless, I hold that no man is the worse for having horses over, rather than under his weight. One can take more liberties when one has an extra stone in hand.

As I took stock of the mare's great hips, of her powerful arched back and muscular thighs, I said to myself: "That's the sort. She'll do me two days a week easy, and take nothing more out of herself than she can help. I'll be bound she's a good feeder, to look at her."

The only thing that puzzled me, was why such a beautiful creature should be thrown away at so low a price. The smallness of the sum made me smell a rat, and as soon as the hammer had fallen to my bid, and the mare was led away, I went round to the stables, hoping to gain some information. But although I questioned and cross-questioned the groom in charge of the string up for sale, he could tell me nothing of my new pur-



chase, beyond that his employer, a large job-master, who hired out a number of animals during the hunting season, had allowed a customer as a favour to send her up for sale with his own lot.

"After all, it doesn't much signify," I muttered to myself as I turned away. "I shall very soon find out where the shoe pinches."

And I did with a vengeance.

That very afternoon, as I went up to her in her stall, she flew at me open-mouthed, and before I suspected her intention, buried both tushes deep in the fleshy part of my arm. It was not a playful bite, which frightens more than it hurts, but a real, nasty, vicious one, and I regularly howled with the pain. Having once got me in her grip she showed no inclination of letting go, but proceeded to shake me as if I had been a dog. In this awkward predicament I doubled up my left fist and struck her a blow with all my might full on the forehead, between the eyes. It made her loose her hold, and, reeling against the wooden side-piece of the stall, I managed to effect an escape.

Thud, thud, went her heels against the

boarding. She lashed out twice, and each time missed me by about the eighth of an inch.

“Buy a muzzle at once,” I said to my groom, “and never take it off except at feeding. She’s the most vicious beast in the stable that I ever came across. Let us hope she is better out of it, else in spite of her good looks, I shall repent me of my bargain.”

I caught an evening train down to Market Harboro’, intending to hunt with Mr. Fernie’s hounds the next day. But my arm swelled to so great a size, that although I bathed it in hot water for an hour, and then, acting on my groom’s advice, rubbed in a liberal supply of Elliman’s embrocation, riding was out of the question. The sinews of my hand stiffened to such an extent, that it took four whole days before I could close my fingers firmly enough to hold the reins. And all this owing to that infernal mare! but she had put me on my mettle, and I vowed I would not be done. So when Thursday morning came, I ordered her out of the stable, and got on to Virago — for by this name I had christened her—for the first time.

The meet was at Stonton Wyville village,

about five miles from the town. No sooner had I seated myself in the saddle than my lady proceeded to treat me to a series of the most terrific kicks, diversified every now and again by a regular Australian buck-jump, which would have gained her celebrity at Buffalo Bill's show. We went up the High Street in this spirited, if scarcely agreeable fashion, much to the amusement of the foot people, who appeared thoroughly to enjoy the somewhat unusual spectacle of a red-coat in difficulties at the start. How I managed to retain my seat was a marvel. Every moment I thought I should be thrown violently over the brute's head to the pavement. As it was I lost both stirrups, and narrowly escaped an ignominious fall, thanks to catching hold of her mane in the nick of time.

I began now to see that patience was quite thrown away upon my charming Virago, and that if I would arrive at the meet at all, I must have recourse to more energetic measures than those hitherto employed. So when she favoured me to another vicious bout of kicking, instead of patting her neck, and seeking to allay her irritability by the

soothing sound of the human voice, I applied my spurs to some tune. She reared up wildly, fighting the air with her fore legs, and for a moment I thought she must certainly overbalance herself. Then, with a furious snort of pure temper she lunged her head forward, and taking the bit between her teeth, tore down the road like a mad thing.

I am fairly strong in the arms, but for over a mile and a half I made no more impression on her than if I were hauling at an elephant. Up hill and down, she went at full speed, clattering over the stones and sending them flying in every direction. In an extraordinarily short space of time we reached the old coaching inn, where the highway branches off to the right for Church' Langton. By a superhuman effort I managed to pull her up into a canter, and set her head in the requisite direction. I doubt if I should have achieved this feat, had she not spied a couple of horsemen ahead, which fortunately caused her mood to agree with mine. My arms were sore, every nerve in my body was quivering. I felt as if I had been sitting for hours in the hot room of a Turkish bath, and yet, strange

as it may appear, my estimation of Virago had gone up.

For the brute could gallop. There was no mistake about that, and I thought if she would only settle down and behave like a reasonable creature instead of an equine fiend, that she might turn out a valuable acquisition after all. But at present she showed no signs of placidity. She galloped resolutely up the stiff hill which leads to Langton, being upset by a railway train just as I had coaxed her into a trot. She pulled hard, right to the top of the ascent, and I found out by this, that her pipes were sound at any rate. I had made three discoveries already, namely, that she was fast, was a good-winded mare, and knew how to kick. The last discovery was not quite as pleasant as the two former, still one had to take the bad and the good together. I am bound to admit there was a great deal of the bad. Every time we passed anything on the road she commemorated the event by a few lively flourishes of her heels, and, as I have mentioned before, as she had particularly strong hind quarters, this produced rather a dis-

turbing effect on her rider's centre of gravity. Once or twice the thought flashed across my mind that in the event of an ugly spill, she would treat one none too well. It was not exactly reassuring.

Luckily we got to the meet without a catastrophe, for which stroke of good fortune I offered up an inward thanksgiving. Arrived at the fixture I hoped things would improve, but I dared not take her into the small enclosure where the pack and most of my friends were assembled, for I quickly ascertained that she kicked with amiable impartiality, not only at horses and hounds, but also at everything which came within reach of her heels. She soon cleared a circle, and the only plan was to keep her well outside the crowd, else I should have been voted a confounded nuisance. I know I felt like one, for not a syllable could I exchange with my "pals," who laughingly shouted out: "Hulloa, old man, you seem to have got hold of a real brute this time. Quite after your own heart, no doubt, but please be careful at the gateways."

Stonton Wyville is a favourite fixture of

the Harboro' people, and there was a large field out, including a strong contingent from Melton and Oakham. The popular master, who during his tenure of office has gained so many golden opinions, now gave the signal for a move, and the mighty cavalcade moved off at a jog-trot towards the wood, which stands on a gentle eminence about a quarter-of-a-mile away from the village, which it overlooks.

The "varmint" happened to be at home, and apparently there was a screaming scent, for no sooner were hounds in covert than they were out of it again on the down-wind side, clamouring ravenously at the brush of an old dog fox, who headed straight for the far-famed and greatly dreaded Stonton brook. I say greatly dreaded designedly, for although it can almost be jumped at a stand in certain places, its banks are so steep, and so treacherously undermined, that it requires a very bold water-jumper to clear it successfully. Many a gallant rider has subsided into the muddy depths of that turbid stream, and wandered vainly up and down them in pursuit of his steed.

Directly the fox broke covert a tremendous stampede took place among the field, who placing prudence before valour, with a few exceptions made off in hot haste for the nearest ford, and no blame to them either. I would have done the same if I could, not relishing a cold immersion so early in the day. But it was perfectly hopeless endeavouring to follow the example of the majority. As soon as she caught sight of the hounds streaming over the green grass, Virago pricked her ears and darted off in pursuit, without deigning to consult the will of her owner. Heavens! what a mouth the mare had. It would have required a Samson or a Sandow to stop her. Ordinary muscles were useless, for she could pull, and no mistake. The pack were literally flying, so I let her go, indeed, I could not do otherwise; but as we raced on to the brook, although not exactly a coward, I confess my heart leapt up into my mouth. It was scarcely the sort of place one would have selected to ride a new, utterly untried horse at, especially one whose performances on the road had not been such as to inspire confidence. But fortunately or unfortunately,



according to opinion, it is an indisputable fact, that occasions arise out hunting when the decision is completely taken out of the biped's hands. He is at the mercy of his beast. So it was in my case.

Isaacs, the huntsman, about as bold and good a man as ever crossed a country, charged the water first. Having got a better start than me, he was about twenty yards ahead, but Virago had the legs of him, and was overhauling him rapidly. He chose an apparently sound spot, close to the stump of an old willow, and his gallant black hunter made a fine bound, taking off in his stride without dwelling, and landing with over a foot to spare. No horse could have jumped better or more honestly, but hard lines! the bank proved to be regularly honeycombed, and giving way under his weight sent him sprawling right on to his head. For a moment it looked as if nothing could save him from falling back into the dark stream, but by a desperate effort, and thanks to Isaacs leaving his head alone, he recovered himself and staggered to his feet. I thought I should have bowled them both over. My friend Virago

never gave me the chance of showing the white feather. Like an arrow shot from the bow, she raced at the brook. There was a terrible half-second's pause, during which she changed her feet, a gleam of water, accompanied by the vision of a horrid gulf, and we landed almost on the black's quarters, sending him considerably farther on his way than was the good beast's intention. I turned my head quickly and saw there was no fear of the bank falling in with Virago. She had cleared it by at least a yard. I patted her streaming neck. Hurrah! she could jump as well as gallop. I would put up with her temper and sundry little eccentricities of conduct, if only she went on as she had begun, for one does not come across a water-jumper every day of one's life. They are very few and far between, and nowhere more so than in High Leicestershire, a country which affords but little practice.

The brook safely left behind, we now bore away to the right, and commenced breasting a hill. Wishing to husband my animal's resources I tried to take a pull at her, but she resented the slightest interference, and nearly

yawed my arms out of their sockets. It was clear that she would go her own way, or none at all, for the manner in which she laid back her ears, and shook her head when touched, led me to imagine that on very little further provocation she might stop altogether. As it appeared a choice of going too fast, or coming to a complete standstill, I chose the former course, and gave up any attempts to ease her. My nerves, as a rule, are pretty fair, but I don't mind admitting she tried them somewhat highly. It is by no means a pleasant sensation being run away with, and feeling yourself practically incapable of asserting your will over that of your steed. In fact, I know few things more absolutely disagreeable, not to say alarming. Certainly the danger of hunting becomes very considerably magnified.

All this time the pack were racing before us at a furious pace. It was as much as ever we could do to keep them in sight, and ride as we might, we were unable to diminish the distance that lay between us and their vanishing sterns. The shires are famed for these tremendous bursts, which seldom last more

than from twenty to five-and-twenty minutes, and no doubt they are very enjoyable to men who can afford to pay three or four hundred guineas for a hunter and racehorse combined ; but, for my part, I prefer a good old-fashioned hunting run, when one is in a position to see the hounds work and can pick and choose the easiest place in the fences. To-day, all selection was out of the question. With a gate within twenty yards it was necessary to jump, and not only to jump, but to jump without hesitation. Those who had gone round by the ford were completely out of it. We never saw them again, and altogether there were not more than some half-a-dozen of us really with the hounds. In such circumstances people achieve prodigies of valour, which, in their calmer moments, they look back upon with mingled sentiments of admiration and horror.

The fields were large, and at first we galloped hard and had the good luck not to encounter any very formidable obstacles. We flew over a couple of fences of medium size, the ditch in each instance being on the landing side. Virago got nearer to them than

I liked. She did not take off in that sure and clever way, which is a finished hunter's chief accomplishment, but I attributed this in great measure to the pace—it really was frantic. But, as previously stated, there was no steadying the mare, and one good point about her was, that she did not offer to refuse. That crowning fault was not included in the list of her shortcomings. She had enough without it, however, and had the binders been strong, must have turned over, judging by the way she brushed through the thorns with her forefeet. She cleared any amount of distance, but she did not rise sufficiently to be a safe conveyance over a strongly-enclosed country. I soon found this out. Nevertheless, when you occupy a foremost place in a fast run, and when your blood is up, it requires a pretty strong warning to induce you to abandon your proud position. As long as you get over somehow you are not particular, and only remember the details afterwards. Then they crop up with ugly significance, and tell on your nerve another day.

We might have been galloping as hard as

we could lay legs to the ground, for something over fifteen minutes, our fox taking a beautiful line, and heading for Norton Gorse, when we came straight down upon a snorting big fence. It had a wide, newly dug-out ditch on the near side, with the earth heaped all along the edge. The hedge was about five feet in height, and as solid as a wall, and was embellished on landing by a stout ox-rail, which appeared recently set up. Virago was beginning to move a trifle less gaily than heretofore, though she had not yet given up pulling, but her gallop had lost its spring and she lurched in her gait. Most of the horses were a bit done, and almost unanimously we slackened speed as this ugly obstacle hove in sight. A rapid glance to right and left, and we saw there was no help for it. Isaacs and I had been cutting out the work alternately up till now, but at this juncture, feeling that courtesy demanded it, I gave him the preference. The black's sides were sobbing, but I knew him for a good horse, and as game a one as ever looked through a bridle. As much could not be said for mine. The pull once out of her, I

realised that her bolt would soon be shot. Isaacs set us all a good example. He seized his horse resolutely by the head, gave him a touch of the spurs and went at the fence. His animal made a splendid effort, but nevertheless he landed with both hind legs well on to the rails. He managed, however, to save a fall, being remarkably quick and nimble. The rest of us hoped the rail would give, but not a bit of it. It would have turned half-a-dozen men and horses over.

All of a sudden, Virago chucked up her head and followed in the black's footsteps. I knew it was all up before she took off, for she got too near the ditch, half-slithered into it, tried to jump, fell with a crash into the fence, and I tumbled head over heels. On recovering from the first shock, I felt that I had not fallen clear, and she was lying on the top of me. My first instinct was to free myself from this awkward position, and I was endeavouring to do so when she struck out violently with those ready hind heels of hers, and then total unconsciousness descended upon my senses. When I regained them I found myself lying in a comfortable bed in a

comfortable bed-room, which was not my own, and which was utterly unfamiliar to me. I tried to look about, but my head felt as if it were stuffed with cotton wool, and I found it impossible to collect my thoughts. I had no more idea what had happened, where I was, or who had conveyed me to a strange abode, than the man in the moon. On all these points my mind was a perfect blank.

After a while I began to be aware that some one was in the room, and later on it dawned upon my enfeebled faculties that this someone belonged to the female sex, and possessed the further advantages of being young and nice-looking. She wore a nursing-cap and apron, which suited her Madonna-like style of beauty admirably. For she was beautiful; I soon found that out, in spite of the strange haze which obstructed my vision, and deprived it of its customary clearness.

“Where am I?” I asked feebly, “and why should I be in bed? I am all right. There’s nothing the matter with me. It’s nonsense treating me as if I were ill.”

She advanced to the bedside, and smiled upon me with the smile of an angel.



“Hush, do not talk,” she said, speaking in a soft and singularly musical voice. “Let me do all the conversation whilst you listen. Exactly a fortnight ago to-day you met with a very serious fall, out hunting; you were not in a fit state to be taken as far as Market Harboro’, so they brought you here.”

“And whose house is this?”

“It belongs to Sir Harry Barrington, and is known by the name of Norton Chase. Sir Harry happens to be abroad, but it was impossible in your condition to take you any farther.”

“You say that I was brought here a fortnight ago,” I said incredulously, unheeding her injunction of silence. “What in the name of wonder have I been doing since, for I do not retain the slightest recollection as to how the time has gone?”

She laughed, a little low laugh that rang pleasantly through the room, for though not loud it was very clear.

“That is not surprising, considering that for fourteen days you have hovered between life and death. Your horse kicked you on the head when you were down, and fractured

the base of your skull. There, now you know the full extent of the mischief. Until now you have remained perfectly unconscious, in spite of our best efforts, but, please God, the worst is over, and before long I hope you will quite recover your health and strength. Meanwhile I am your nurse, and you must obey me. I can't allow any talking. Come, take this, if you please," and she held a drinking cup containing some strong beef-tea to my lips.

I drank it off obediently ; there was a gentle authority about her, which fairly took me by storm, and rendered resistance impossible.

"That's right," she said, approvingly, as I drained the cup to its dregs. "And now, like a dear, good patient, compose yourself, and go to sleep."

It was an extraordinary position for me to find myself carefully waited upon, and tended by a young and pretty woman. If a trifle embarrassing, the situation was far from unpleasant, for my nurse did not look a day older than four-and-twenty. In ordinary circumstances the embarrassment might perhaps have outweighed the pleasure, but I felt too

weak to offer any resistance to her will, and with a helpless smile sank exhausted back on to the pillows.

Had I been equal to thinking, the intelligence she had seen fit to communicate would have afforded me considerable subject for thought, but my head ached with a dull, dead pain, which rendered me incapable of reflection. My nurse drew the blinds down gently, and darkened the room, with the result that after a bit I went fast asleep, and obeyed her injunctions to the letter.

I woke up, feeling very much refreshed, and with the fog that enveloped my brain lightened, though not altogether removed. Nurse Mary—for so my attendant begged that I would call her—came and looked at me. There was something charming and restful about her personality which quite defies my poor attempts at description.

“Well,” she said cheerfully—as far as I could make out, she was always cheerful—“are you better?”

“Yes, ever so much,” I answered, feeling full of gratitude, as she smoothed the sheet with her cool, thin fingers. “Can you tell

me, by any chance, if the mare was hurt at the same time I was ? ” for I experienced considerable curiosity on this point.

“ Yes, I heard your doctor say that she got wedged in between the hedge and the oxer. It appears that she kicked so viciously when in this position that nobody dared go to the rescue. At last they fetched a saw and managed to cut through the rail, but it was too late. In her struggles she had injured herself internally, and though they got her home after a good deal of trouble, she had eventually to be shot.”

“ Thirty-three pounds out of my pocket,” I observed, “ though, as she would certainly have broken my neck or her own, had I continued to ride her, I need scarcely regret the circumstance. Still, cash is a rare commodity.”

“ Don’t mind about that, when the brute did her very best to give you your *coup de grâce*,” said Mary.

In the mouth of a professional attendant, this last expression surprised me.

“ Nurse,” I said, “ I’m afraid you will think me an awfully curious fellow, and pray don’t

answer the question if you consider it the least impertinent, but you are a lady, aren't you? You could not be anything else." And I scrutinised her from head to foot, scarce conscious of the rudeness I committed in doing so.

"And so you are astonished to hear me air my French. Well, yes, I am," and blushing red as a rose, she cast down her sweet modest eyes.

"I was sure of it. Your voice betrayed that fact."

"Sir Harry Barrington is my uncle," she volunteered. "My mother who, alas, is now dead, was his sister."

"Then what made you take to nursing?"

"Principally because I had to gain my own livelihood, and, not being particularly clever, could not earn money in any other way, and also because I suppose everyone has his or her vocation, and nursing was mine. Ever since the days of my childhood, the height of my ambition has always been to tend the sick and the poor."

"And are you happy?" I asked curiously, wondering how so bright and pretty a

creature could voluntarily doom herself to a life which, at best, seemed to me very depressing.

“Oh, yes, perfectly. I am far happier than if I were going to balls and parties, and living only for dress and frivolity. I can’t imagine any purely selfish existence being really satisfactory. It is confining the sympathies to a single object. Egotism must have a deteriorating effect upon the character.”

I looked into her serene face, and saw that she meant what she said in all good faith. My conscience pricked me a little, but she charmed me with the charm which a thoroughly good woman always exercises over a man, no matter how bad he may be, or how unworthy his life. I was thirty last birthday, and, up to now, no girl had ever made my heart throb. Sport had been the bride at whose shrine I worshipped; but, as I lay there in bed, and watched Mary’s gentle, graceful movements, felt the touch of her soft hands, and rested my eyes upon her pure, calm beauty, a wild passion grew up within my breast—a passion such as a few

short weeks ago I would have scoffed at, and I fell madly, desperately in love.

Fool! what was the use, since I had nothing, or next to nothing, to marry on? Time passed away, and Mary, during one of our many subsequent conversations, confided to me that she possessed no fortune in the present nor prospects in the future. I thought the matter well over, I struggled manfully with temptation, and arrived at the bitter conclusion that there was but one course open to me, namely—to flee.

So one day, when I was recovering fast and began to feel more like myself again, I abruptly announced my intention. Mary was sitting near the window, stitching away at some piece of work. It dropped from her hands, and she turned first red, then pale.

“You must not think of leaving this house yet,” she said, trying to steady her voice, and to speak with her old authority. “It would be sheer madness until the wound in your head is perfectly healed.” Then her fortitude gave way and she added hurriedly: “Why, oh! why do you want to go away? Have I failed in my duty?”

"I don't want to go away," I answered, stung out of all self-control by her reproachful air. "On the contrary, I would give everything I possess in this world to remain if I could do so honourably. But, Mary dear, has it ever struck you, that I should scarcely be mortal, if I could lie here day after day and not learn to love you as you deserve? I do love you with all my heart," I went on passionately, "but I can't ask you to be my wife, because—well, because I have no money. Six hundred a year is not much to keep two people upon, as times go now-a-days. I wouldn't mind for myself, but I mind very much for you, and therefore, I am resolved not to ask you to share my poverty."

There was a long pause, I hardly dared to look at her ; nevertheless I could see she had turned her pretty head away and seemed to be staring steadfastly out of the window. Why did she not speak? Surely she might have said one word in reply?

"So," I resumed tremulously, pained by her silence, which crushed the last hope existing in my heart, "I mean to



leave. Good-bye, Mary; won't you shake hands?"

Then, all at once, with the colour rushing to her sweet cheeks, she left her post, and raised a pair of shining eyes to mine.

"Dick," she said, softly and shyly, "money is not everything. People think a great deal too much of it now-a-days. I don't a bit mind being poor, and besides we—we could wait."

I could hardly believe my senses. For a moment the room seemed to spin round and round.

"Mary," I cried breathlessly, overcome with joy, "my darling, my beloved, do you mean what you say? Am I to take you at your word? Think well before you answer."

"Yes. It would be a very funny sort of love if people were not prepared to make some small sacrifices for the sake of each other." Then a delightfully roguish smile broke out over her countenance, and she added: "One good thing, Dick, is that you won't have a professional nurse in future. She will always be near at hand, which will

effect a considerable economy in our household expenditure."

I clasped her to my breast, and kissed her brow, her cheeks, her mouth.

"Ah, Mary," I cried, "you are right. When one is happy one can never be poor. And just to think that I owe all this to that brute of a mare. If it had not been for her I should never have made your acquaintance."

"I am so glad she is dead, and that you can't ride her again," cooed Mary, twining her soft hands round my neck.

"Poor Virago! When she cracked my crown I little thought what a good turn she was doing me. Shall I sing you her epitaph?"

"You foolish Dick. Have you gone mad?"

"Here it is:

"Three cheers for that brute of a mare,  
Who spared my life by a shade,  
For though her heels my wits impaired,  
They've found me a charming maid."

"It is not exactly what you would call good poetry, but no matter."

Reader, we were married in six months,

and very soon after the ceremony I had an unexpected stroke of luck. An old uncle died suddenly—they always do in books and novels, but this one was good enough to depart in real life. He hated his heir, and had never seen me since my birth, so that I did not feel much grief at his death. He left me his title and eight thousand a year.

Mary is now Lady Hawthorne, and I verily believe that I am the happiest man in the whole kingdom. Although my head bothers me a good deal at times, I always retain a soft corner in my heart for the vicious beast who was the means of bringing me and my dear wife together.

So with all thy faults, Virago, peace be to thy bones.

A DAY WITH THE DEVON AND  
SOMERSET STAGHOUNDS.

AN Irish landlord and his daughter, with nothing, or next to nothing, to live upon.

I hope your sympathies are enlisted. If they are not, they ought to be ; for we are reduced from comfort to discomfort, from a good social position to obscurity, and from comparative affluence to a state bordering on downright pauperism.

I am twenty-one years of age, and I pity myself intensely ; but I pity my father still more. I have all my life before me. Something may turn up ; something may happen. Who knows ? And even at the worst, youth is always hopeful and sanguine. But papa, at sixty-three, suddenly finds himself turned out of his house by a pack of idle, dishonest, good-for-nothing tenants, who have deprived him of his fortune, and for the last five years have rendered his life a burden.

And all this came of the Land League.

Until that iniquitous society spread and took root in the country, and was virtually encouraged by Mr. Gladstone's Government, we rubbed along fairly well. Papa was then Mr. O'Brian, of O'Brian Castle, and master of the Ballynakillem hounds. He had kept them for twenty years, and no keener sportsman or truer fox-hunter ever threw his leg across the pigskin.

I look back with regret to those happy days. It seems to me that whatever kind fate may hold in store for me, nothing can ever equal the time when I was mistress of the big, rambling old castle, with its wild wilderness of a garden, and could ride any horse I pleased in the stables.

Oh! the fun of forcing those half-broken three and four year olds to hop on and off a high bank, and of scouring after recalcitrant hounds at a swinging gallop! Those glorious hours spent in the hunting field will for ever live in my memory. So, too, will the broad, rippling Shannon, rushing down between two banks of verdure, as seen from our drawing-room windows. Many a time have I stood and looked at it, whilst the red sun sank

slowly in the west and reflected its fiery glories in the silvery water, and the great trees on the opposite shore stood out black as ink against the crimson sky. The beauty and peace of the scene seem to have stamped themselves upon my spirit for ever.

And now these things are over. The sights and sounds of my childhood have vanished, and at twenty-one I am called upon to make a fresh and sordid start in life. It is very hard—very hard to have to leave the beautiful, wild, free country where I was born and bred, and to be shut up in a close and horrible city—to be a mere nobody amongst a vast herd of human beings with whom you feel out of tune—to find your nerves grated like a nutmeg every hour of the day—never to have enough money, and above all, when you go out into the streets and look at the many well-bred horses you see around, to feel that yours may never be the good luck to sit upon one again. Ah! yes, as I said before, I am very, very sorry for myself, and hate the Liberal Government with all the fervour of which my nature is capable. I think horrible things of it, and if

it were not for papa I should say them out loud ; but he cannot bear to hear even his enemies abused.

But it is so sad to see him. Five years ago he was a hale, upright, stalwart man, with a fine fresh colour in his cheeks and eyes as clear as a hawk's. When he went out arrayed for the chase, in all the glories of his red coat and huntsman's cap, it sent a thrill of pride through my frame to see him. And yet he must have had troubles even in those days. Our income could never have been equal to our expenditure. The crash did not come all at once ; we struggled on as long as we could. Everything about the house and grounds fell into disrepair. We cut down our establishment, lived in half the castle, hunted only three days a week instead of four ; but all these petty sacrifices were in vain. Tenant after tenant, backed up by the Land League, partly through natural reluctance and partly through intimidation, refused to pay any rent. Matters became desperate ; still father hoped against hope and looked forward to better days. At last ! they never came.

And then an incident took place which hastened the finale.

We were out hunting—I remember it all so well—and were just drawing the first covert. The hounds were very mute ; they did not utter a sound. It was a sure find, and father wondered at their silence. Even old Prettymaid, who had the best nose in the whole pack, never once threw her tongue. The gorse was very thick, and there were no rides cut through it. Father cheered them on from the outside. At last he grew impatient and blew his horn. Do you know what happened then? Some five or six animals crawled slowly and painfully out of covert. They rolled in agony on the grass for a few minutes, their poor limbs jerking convulsively, and then they died—died under father's very nose, and by poison.

He swore a solemn oath that he would leave the country where such abominations took place. He said the spirit had gone out of the Irishmen, that they had turned themselves into cowards and assassins ; and the next day we packed up our things and left.

And now here we are, living in a little



poky London lodging, in a narrow street running out of the Brompton Road. Not a very choice neighbourhood, but beggars cannot be choosers. Our agent was deputed to settle up affairs after our departure from Ireland, and he tells us that three hundred a year is all we have to live upon.

This is bad enough, and yet there are other troubles even greater than monetary ones. Papa is a different man; his health has broken down altogether. He sits for hours staring blankly out of the window at the rows of dingy houses opposite. Oh! how we miss the noble Shannon now. For some time I have been seriously uneasy about him, and yesterday I made him go and see a doctor. Only think what the doctor said! He said that father had a cataract forming in both eyes, and that when the winter came round he must submit to an operation, the cost of which would be a hundred guineas. A hundred guineas in our position! What a mockery! No wonder we neither of us feel very cheerful. Poor dear old dad! my heart is fit to break as I sit opposite to him at the breakfast-table and notice how all the life

and manhood seem to have gone out of his countenance. And yet his spirits must be kept up at any cost ; Doctor Branksome particularly enjoined it. But how ? Oh, for some break, some change in our narrow, monotonous lives ! We country people, used to roaming about the green fields, with the grass under our feet and the sky over our heads, feel imprisoned when surrounded on all sides by huge, grimy masses of bricks and mortar. Nevertheless, we have a few friends in the metropolis, and it is an undeniable fact that London is the best place in the whole world in which to hide your diminished head.

It is the end of July, and Town has grown very hot and dusty. The white pavements glare, the sun beats down, the roads are dry and hard, and there is not a single cool, pleasant thing on which to rest the eye. Involuntarily I sigh. Father hears me and sighs also.

Do what we will, we are a doleful couple.

Suddenly there comes the well-known rattat at the door. In another minute a maid brings me a letter bearing a country postmark. I open it hurriedly. It is from

Clare Harrison, an old schoolfellow of mine, asking us to go and stay with her, for what is generally known by the name of the Quantock week.

“I want to introduce you to the Devon and Somerset staghounds,” she wound up by saying.

My whole face must have changed, for even father, with his poor dim eyes, noticed its altered expression.

“Why, Norah,” he said, “what is it?”

And then I tell him. He, too, is pleased at the thought of getting into the country.

“Would you like to go, child?” he asked.

“Oh! yes, father, if—if we can manage it.”

“The journey will be rather expensive, I’m afraid.”

“But we shall save in other ways,” I said eagerly. “There will be no meals to pay for.”

“Won’t you want all sorts of new frocks and fal-lals, Norah?”

“No,” resolutely; “I shall do without them.”

And so it is settled, and I retire to my little, dark back bed-room, which looks out

over the leads, and inspect my wardrobe. Thank goodness, I kept one habit, when I parted with all the others. It is not very new, but it will answer the purpose. As for frocks—well, I never troubled my head much about clothes in Ireland, and they are all very shabby, and very, very old-fashioned. Clare is a smart dresser ; she was always fond of finery, even in our school-days. I shall look a regular dowdy beside her. But it can't be helped. And then I take a surreptitious peep in the glass, and ask myself whether by any chance a pair of dark blue Irish eyes, with very long black lashes, can atone for the deficiencies of my toilet.

I live in a fever of excitement, until the day arrives for our departure.

Oh! how beautiful the fields look! how fresh and green! Papa lets down the window of our railway carriage and gazes dreamily out at the sun-kissed landscape. It is hot, and the cattle are everywhere congregated under the trees, where they stand stamping their feet and switching their long tails. The corn yellows in the sunshine, and light cloud-shadows steal gently over half-ripe heads of

wheat and barley. A smile of satisfaction rises to father's face. The very sight of it makes me happy

Our journey continued without interruption until we arrived at Taunton. There we alighted, hunted after the luggage, pushed our way through crowds of holiday-makers, tempted by the fine weather, and changed into another train, due to arrive at the little way-side station where we were to descend.

We had just got comfortably settled in our new compartment when the door flew open and a gentleman stepped in. Now the Britisher on his travels is peculiar. The entry of a stranger into his particular carriage generally rouses his resentment. That feeling gives way to one of passive endurance, which, in its turn, is succeeded by a certain amount of curiosity. After a while, I glanced at the new-comer. He was a tall, well-built man, with clear hazel eyes, that were calm in expression but very penetrating, as I discovered to my cost ; for he intercepted my glance and covered me with confusion. He might have been thirty or thirty-five years

of age ; but his face was so grave, that no doubt he looked older than he really was. Somehow, he inspired me with interest. I felt that I should like to know more about him, and learn the reason of his seriousness. But we did not speak, and buried ourselves behind our several books and newspapers. At length we reached our destination, where a wagonette awaited us.

“Do you come from Knapton Hall, my man?” asked father of the coachman.

“Yes, sir. Mr. Harrison has sent up a cart for the luggage, because there is another gentleman to come up as well.”

Another gentleman ! I looked around and saw our travelling companion gathering up his belongings on the platform. When he had seen them in safe custody, he advanced towards the carriage and said to father, “I believe we are all bound for the same destination.”

Whereupon he seated himself by my side, and entered into a desultory conversation with father, which lasted until we reached Knapton Hall.

Another minute, and I was pounced upon

by Clare, who, after sundry embraces, carried me off to my room.

“Just fancy your coming up with dear old Dismal!” she exclaimed. “How funny!”

“Who is dear old Dismal, Clare?” I said laughingly. “The coachman who drove us, the horse who pulled us, or the gentleman who accompanied us?”

“Why, the gentleman, of course. How stupid you are, Norah!”

“Very likely. London smuts have an exceedingly demoralizing effect upon the intellect. But you have aroused my curiosity. Is Dismal the real name of our travelling-companion?”

Clare went off into a peal of laughter, which struck me as being a little exaggerated.

“Oh! dear, no. That’s only a nick-name we girls have bestowed upon him.”

“For what reason? To my mind he looks neither so old nor yet so melancholy as to deserve the sobriquet.”

Clare grew suddenly serious.

“You’re right, Norah. And don’t imagine that I wish to insinuate a word against

Lawrence Carruthers. He is one of the best and nicest men I know, but——” turning very red.

“But what, Clare? Go on : I’m interested.”

“Well, the fact of the matter is, I feel a wee bit afraid of him. You see I’m volatile. I can’t help being volatile ; it’s my nature. Nevertheless I like Mr. Carruthers extremely.”

“Oh ! you do, do you ?”

“Yes, but what’s the good ? I always have a horrid sort of feeling that he disapproves of me.”

“That’s not likely, Clare.”

“I don’t know. Sometimes I think I should hate the man, if I were not so sorry for him.” And she clenched her fist with unusual determination.

I began to scent a romance, and pressed for further information.

“Why should you be sorry for Mr. Carruthers ?” I asked.

“Because, about four years ago, he was engaged to a very beautiful girl—a Miss Wickham. They were to have been married



in a week, and all the preparations were made for the marriage. He was desperately in love, and she eloped with young Lord Walton at the last moment. Poor Lawrence was terribly cut up, and he has never been quite the same since."

"In what way, Clare? You don't mean to say that he is that *rara avis*, a constant man, and mourns for the old love instead of consoling himself with the new?"

"I don't know; but he shuts himself up, avoids women's society, and hardly goes anywhere, except here. He is, however, passionately fond of hunting, and the Quantock week is an inducement to him to emerge from his shell."

I went up to my friend, and laying both hands on her shoulders looked her straight in the face.

"Clare," I said, "have you anything to tell me—anything I may congratulate you upon?"

The colour rushed to her cheeks in one bright wave.

"No," she stammered. "N—not yet."

"But there may be?"

“I—I don’t know; sometimes I fancy so.”

“And you like him, Clare? You would take him if he asked you?”

“Yes,” she murmured under her breath. “I love him very dearly; but I’m afraid—I’m afraid he does not care about me.”

I said no more. I had learned Clare’s secret, and respected it.

At dinner I was seated between Mr. Harrison and Mr. Carruthers.

After what my friend had told me, I naturally desired to pass judgment on the latter. Mr. Harrison began asking me questions as to the state of things in Ireland, and unconsciously I gave a moving account of the sufferings of the landlords, and of my father in particular. Before long Mr. Carruthers joined in the conversation, and, to my surprise, he possessed a profound knowledge of the subject, and was evidently an exceedingly intelligent and well-informed man. I experienced none of that fear from which poor Clare professed to suffer, and by the end of dinner we had become quite good friends. I should have been entirely at my ease, had it not been for a consciousness that

every now and again Clare's eyes were fixed upon me with a slightly wistful expression.

Directly the ladies retired, she came bustling up to me and said :

"Oh, Norah! I must congratulate you on being the only young lady of my acquaintance who has ever succeeded in making Lawrence Carruthers talk."

I thought she did him an injustice, and told her so. Poor Clare! it was her over-anxiety which placed her at a disadvantage in the presence of the man she loved. But I didn't want to increase the poor girl's troubles by flirting with her lover, and presently I began talking about the next day's meet—a subject which just then lay much nearer my heart.

"Am I really to go out?" I asked with incredulous delight.

"Of course," Clare answered. "We have got you a good stout cob. Not having ridden for so long, I thought you would prefer something quiet."

"Quite right. I don't want to disgrace myself before a 'Zoomersetshire' public. Where does my steed hail from?" I was in

the wildest sprits, and made no effort to control them.

“From Taunton ; but I must confess to knowing nothing about him. There is such a demand for horses during this particular week, that one is fortunate in securing any sort of an animal.”

Presently the gentlemen appeared, and I was sent off to the piano and made to sing some of papa's favourite ballads. Mr. Carruthers listened attentively, and with every sign of approval. I wished he would go and talk to Clare ; but when I had done singing, he came and sat by my side and remained there until it was bedtime.

Next morning we were up betimes, and at half-past ten the horses came round to the door. Papa and Mrs. Harrison had settled to drive ; the rest of the party were equipped for riding.

I looked at my cob with the eye of a connoisseur. He was a fat, demure chestnut, with a long tail, thick neck, and shaggy mane. He might have good qualities, but he did not convey the impression of possessing any particular speed. Mr. Carruthers

punched his sides, and remarked that he appeared wholly wanting in condition, which was precisely the opinion I had arrived at.

“Never fear,” responded the groom in attendance, “he’ll carry the young lady like a bird.”

Mr. Carruthers shook his head doubtfully, but said nothing. Being now mounted, we all commenced the ascent of the steep hill that led up to the open moor. When we reached its summit, a beautiful scene presented itself. Undulating masses of purple heather stretched in all directions, bright with blossom and elastic to the tread. Green, many-foliaged coombes lay in the valleys and nestled on the slopes of the hills; whilst beyond shimmered a placid blue sea, kissed into a myriad diamonds by the summer sunshine. The air was warm yet bracing; it was a pleasure to human lungs to breathe its pure ozone. Dozens of vehicles of every description were already drawn up in position. The ground was carpeted with white tablecloths and huge wicker luncheon-baskets. It resembled a gigantic picnic; and every single person present appeared

brimming over with fun, geniality, and an innate love of sport.

The tufters were put into covert, and a long period of inaction ensued, whilst slowly but surely they were doing their work. It was known that the harbourer had harboured a warrantable stag overnight. At length a stir took place amongst the crowd. Horsemen began to gallop to and fro. Before long the excitement grew intense. Word shortly came that Arthur, the huntsman, was already on his way back to certain farm-buildings where the body of the pack was safely shut up. At this moment I, in common with my companions, went sneaking off in order to secure a good start. The proceeding was unsportsmanlike, but I followed the majority. A little confusion now occurred, until the pack, emerging from their prison, were laid on the scent. Then the great liver and white, twenty-six inch hounds trailed over the heather (not quite in the same compact order as foxhounds), and we galloped after them as hard as we could; for though they may not seem to travel very fast, the pace is deceptive.

My blood began to course like wild-fire

through my veins. The passion of the chase was upon me. I felt I would rather die than be left behind and not keep up with that crowd of galloping horsemen. But it was terribly mortifying to find my rotund chesnut labour along in a clumsy, floundering fashion, whilst all my chirrups and most energetic invocations failed to increase his speed. Clare sailed past me on her wiry little throughbred bay, going two strides to my one. I envied her her mount, and broke the Tenth Commandment on the spot.

And now we began to "sink a coombe"—that, I am informed, is the correct way of expressing the process. It was very steep, but the chesnut and I managed to slither down somehow. He was sure-footed, and knew how to use his hocks. Hope revived within my breast; for a few brief seconds triumph even took its place. Arthur was close ahead, and I could hear the hounds baying in front of me. Alás! I forgot that the opposite hill must all be laboriously climbed.

The gallant chesnut plunged through a rocky river-bed and almost tumbled on to his

nose. I shortened my bridle and urged him to his speed. He responded gaily, and we commenced the ascent at a brisk canter. Fifty yards, however, brought him to a trot. He was thick in the wind and very fat. I seized a lock of his plentiful mane—it was harsh and bristly—and stood up in the stirrup, so as to relieve his hind-quarters of my weight. The path was very narrow. There was really only room for one person at a time, but people jostled past me with and without apology. I felt indignant and annoyed by turns, but I could not keep my place, do what I would. Another hundred yards and old Slowcoach subsided into a walk and I could hear his poor heart beating under me like a sledge-hammer. Still we toiled up, up, up. It was dreadful work, and rendered still worse by the fact that the hounds had long since reached the summit, and were streaming away on a burning scent. I thought regretfully of the horses I used to ride in Ireland—the wild, fast, semi-broken things—and wished for any one of them.

A mad desire to get on infuriated me. I grew callous. It sounds horrible in a woman,



but I lost all mercy. I kicked the chesnut quite hard with my heel, jobbed him in the mouth, and even applied my hunting-crop to his streaming sides. Poor beast! he would have gone faster if he could.

The sun was very hot. Every minute it seemed to grow hotter. My face was scarlet; as for the cob, he was bathed in perspiration, whilst his distended nostrils, outstretched neck and drooping head told too plainly that his bolt was shot.

By the time we had clambered up the rocky, winding path, forced our way through low-drooping branches, and once more gained the heather, the wretched animal was reduced almost to a standstill. I was fiercely, desperately disappointed. The hard-riding division were far ahead, galloping straight on in the direction of the sea. In a very few minutes I was passed by the whole heterogeneous crowd of men and women, and found myself with a beaten horse alone on the wide moor. You who have never been placed in a similar position may laugh at me if you like, but, speaking from experience, the situation is by no means pleasant.

I stood there quite still, allowing the unhappy cob to get his wind, and waiting till the jerkings of his heart grew less distressingly apparent. No traces of the hunt were to be seen by this time. Then I formed a desperate resolve, and determined to go straight on *somewhere*.

I had not an idea where I was. Bumping over the heather on a rough and thoroughly tired-out animal is a fatiguing process. Very soon a sad conviction forced itself upon my mind that I, too, was dreadfully out of condition. One of the elastic straps in my skirt gave way. It caused me infinite trouble ; for, do what I would, the skirt no longer kept in its place.

It is the last straw that breaks the camel's back. I know it sounds utterly ridiculous, but at this final disaster a sense of horrible desolation overwhelmed me, and, dropping the reins on the cob's neck, I began to sob like a child.

When I recovered sufficient self-possession to look around, to my intense discomfiture, I perceived a horseman close at hand ; but my discomfiture changed to

amazement when I saw that he was Mr. Carruthers.

“Hulloa!” he exclaimed cheerily. “Why, what’s the matter?”

I don’t think I ever felt so deadly ashamed of myself in all my life.

“My horse is beat,” I said sheepishly, “and I can’t get on; and—and—where’s everybody?”

“Everybody’s not very far off,” he answered with a smile. “The stag has taken to the sea.”

“I suppose you have had a splendid run, Mr. Carruthers?”

“Oh! dear, no. Don’t vex yourself on that account; you have missed nothing. But what a shame to send you out on such a horse! I knew he would not be able to gallop when I saw him this morning. That’s why I came to look for you.”

A flush rose to my cheek.

“*Did* you come and look for me on purpose, Mr. Carruthers?” stealing a shy glance at him from under my eyelashes.

“Yes. I missed you after a bit, so thought I would institute a search; and as

things have turned out, I'm very glad I did."

I held my peace ; for, big goose as I was, and base traitor to Clare, I felt a thrill of pleasure shoot through my frame. He was so manly and self-contained that I could not help liking him.

"Are you afraid to go down rather an awkward place, Miss O'Brian?" he asked presently.

I detest that word *afraid*; I've always detested it since I was a baby.

"No ; not a bit," I answered with returning spirit.

But the path was even rougher than I bargained for. Great stones and layers of natural rock rendered it extremely bad "going." Mr. Carruthers led the way on his good grey. I followed in single file, my cob slipping cautiously down on his hind-quarters. We had almost reached the road at the bottom, when suddenly he made a bad peck, half recovered himself, stumbled again, and finally rolled heavily on to his side, pinning me beneath him. Mr. Carruthers was off his horse in a second.

"Are you hurt?" he inquired anxiously.

"No—o; I don't think so." But I was not sure, all the same.

The chesnut scrambled to his feet, and I tried to follow suit; but my right ankle hurt so badly that I would have fallen to the ground had not Mr. Carruthers held me up in his strong arms. For a moment our eyes met, and again that curious thrill went through me.

"You can't walk?" he said.

"No; I fear not. My ankle is sprained."

Mr. Carruthers looked grave.

"There is an inn close by," he said, after a momentary pause. "Do you think you could sit your horse for a hundred yards or so, if I walk by your side and lead him?"

"Yes; I will try, at any rate."

"That's right." And so saying he lifted me up into the saddle as if I were a child. I had never felt so deliciously weak in all my life—I, who was generally considered rather a strong-minded young person; but the events of the day had rendered me very grateful for a protector.

We reached the inn without further mishap. Then Mr. Carruthers said:

“And now, Miss O'Brian, I'll go and find your father. I saw Mrs. Harrison's carriage a short while ago, and no doubt she will drive you home.”

Shall I confess it? I was thoroughly disappointed. I had taken the idea into my head that he himself would escort me back to Knapton Hall.

I was laid up for a whole fortnight, and, in spite of my sprained ankle, the time passed very pleasantly. The Harrisons were more than kind; whilst Mr. Carruthers, who had only come for a week, stayed on in a most unaccountable manner.

He was very good to me; so good that every time a tap came at the door, or I heard his footstep outside in the passage, my heart began to beat and the tell-tale blood flew to my cheeks.

Just a fortnight! And yet how it changed me! I jumped from a girl into a woman, full of secret, unsatisfied longings.

We are going back to town—to the London sparrows and the London blacks. My heart

faints at the prospect, but we can no longer trespass on Mr. and Mrs. Harrison's hospitality. I try to appear indifferent, and to hide my real feelings. *They* are very sad ones; for by nightfall we shall be far away, and Lawrence Carruthers has never even asked if he may come and see us when he visits London in the winter. I begin to think I have been a terrible fool; and then Clare—but I dare not think of her. A barrier seems to have grown up between us, and I feel responsible for its existence. So I muse disconsolately. A slight noise attracts my attention. I look up and Lawrence—I mean Mr. Carruthers—is by my side.

There is an expression on his face which sets my pulses throbbing, and a wild expectancy seizes me.

“I have come to wish you good-bye,” he says with outward calm, “and have therefore stolen a march over my host and hostess.”

My nerves are overstrung; I am not myself. It becomes harder and harder to act one's part with propriety.

“Good-bye,” I echo satirically. “You seem in a great hurry to get rid of us. Our

train does not go for another hour : but I suppose you wish to speed the parting guest."

"Do you believe what you say?" he asks, looking me steadily in the face with his clear orbs.

I cannot endure this gaze. My eyes droop before his.

"Yes, of course I do." But the words come forth lame and halting.

"Then you are wrong in your conclusion, Miss O'Brian. Will you answer me one question?"

"What is it?" And my heart leaps with delight.

"Are *you* sorry to leave Knapton?"

My disappointment is so great that I have hard work to conceal it. He is playing with me, as a cat plays with a mouse.

"You have no right to ask," I reply brusquely, trying to guard my pitiful secret. "What can it matter to you?" giving my head a defiant backward toss.

A light blazes up into his face, and literally transforms it. He looks simply grand.

"It matters a great deal. I cannot part from you as from a stranger. I cannot say



good-bye unless you give me some hope that we may meet again. For this reason I have sought you out now, and in order to know my fate."

Good God! it has come. My brain reels, my eyes grow dim; my whole being thrills in response to his words, and yet I can only stammer, "What—what do you mean?"

"Mean!" he cries passionately: "that I love you; that I want you to be my wife; that I cannot and will not lose you, Norah darling!" and he holds out his arms. "Won't you come? Have you nothing to tell me on your side?"

I cannot speak. My heart is full to overflowing; but he looks into my eyes, and there he sees all that he wants to know.

My happiness would have been perfect but for the thought of Clare. Conscience troubled me sorely, and the worst of it was I could not confide my anxieties to Lawrence. There was but little time left for action. I took a bold step, however, and before we said good-bye to Knapton Hall confessed all, with deepest contrition and humility.

“Clare,” I said, “I have been a brute, but indeed—indeed I did not mean to be one. I could not help being fond of him; it was stronger than myself. I thought to have crept away from here, and never said a word; but when he spoke, then all my good resolves vanished. Can you ever forgive me?”

She was a dear, good girl. She listened to my tale in silence, and, when I had done, said softly:

“Don’t blame yourself, Norah. He cared for you, and he didn’t for me. There’s nothing more to be said; and it was my own fault for being so foolish.”

“Oh no, Clare, dear Clare, don’t say that. You are worthier of him than I.”

She turned to me with a smile, which rendered every feature beautiful:

“Worthy or not worthy, may God bless him. I am glad he is happy; and as for myself, it does not signify.”

They were simple words, but they touched me to the quick. I folded her in my arms and kissed her again and again.

Happy? Yes, he — we are very, very

happy. Sometimes I tremble at our joy. When I look around me in the world, and see all the miserable marriages, the ill-assorted couples, and the hopeless wretchedness of husband and wife, then I thank God on my bended knees for the mercies vouchsafed to me.

And father is better—much better. The operation was performed successfully, and he has almost recovered the use of his eyes.

Lawrence talks of doing up Castle O'Brian, and of our all going to live there in the summer months. When my baby is born, I hope it may open its tiny eyes on our old home, and see the bright beautiful Shannon rolling on towards the ocean. And some day, Lawrence declares, we shall go out hunting again with the Devon and Somerset staghounds during the Quantock week; but he vows he will take precious good care to mount me on something better than the chesnut cob.

But all the same that worthy animal occupies a sacred place in my memory; for if it had not been for him I might never have won my dear, dear husband.

## RUN TO GROUND.

THE young ladies of Huntingshire were all agreed that he would have been a most awfully nice young man had he not been so painfully and abominably shy. It was quite useless making up to him.

He did nothing but blush, and stutter, and look another way in spite of their best endeavours to break through the crust of his reserve. He was like a snail in his shell, only snails sometimes come out, and he never did. All their sweet smiles and pretty speeches were wasted. This was the more provoking because Anthony, commonly called Tony Tollemache, was not only undeniably good-looking, but also had magnificent expectations. It was impossible for any well-brought up girl to shut her eyes to his merits; but if a young man can't look a young woman in the face, if he grows pink every time he is spoken to, and has no more notion of the art of flirtation than a baby,

what *is* the good of him? He is just so much valuable male flesh and muscle thrown away.

Tony's father, Sir Percival Tollemache, was an enormously rich man, possessing between fifty and sixty thousand a year, and as the world was persuaded that he did not spend a quarter of his income, it looked with exceeding favour upon his only son, and made up its mind that since Sir Percival had but one daughter, the bulk of his wealth would necessarily descend to Tony.

Added to these advantages, the young man had others, which counted for almost though not quite as much with his feminine admirers. He possessed a pair of blue eyes that would have been simply adorable had he but granted a few opportunities of realizing their full attractions; also a pleasant, open face, good to look upon, and which pleased the women by its combined expression of modesty and manliness. How sad it was to see all these gifts, personal and otherwise, completely thrown away.

Tony was so absurdly and idiotically shy that even Miss Arabella Whinborough, the prettiest girl and the most audacious flirt in

all Huntingshire, could do nothing with him, and had positively to give him up in despair. She smiled her sweetest at the foolish youth, and he only blushed and looked confused. She paid him the most extravagant compliments, trying her very hardest to extract one or two in return, and what did he do? Why, nothing but stammer and turn scarlet. She gave him every encouragement; vowed she loved tobacco and dogs, and even ferrets, but all to no purpose. Tony kept his head, and in spite of Miss Arabella's charms refused to lay himself at her feet.

The dowagers shook their heads despondently and said to each other, "My dear, what is to be done with a young man who has not a word to say for himself, who looks the picture of misery when he is in the society of a pretty girl, and who has not an idea in his head beyond horses and hunting? And yet, what a pity it is to be sure. He would make such a good husband and be so thoroughly domestic in his tastes."

Tony had been to Cheam and to Eton, and had learnt as much at either place as young gentlemen with plenty of pocket-money and a

natural disinclination to work generally do. Afterwards he went to Oxford, where he had the distinguished honour of winning the Christ Church Grinds. On the whole, his college career was fairly satisfactory. He did not take honours certainly, but then what need is there for a baronet's son and the reputed heir to sixty thousand a year to bother his head about classics and mathematics? Why, he comes into the world with honours without having to work for them. There they are, all ready for him. Lucky dog!

To Tony's credit, he did nothing to disgrace himself whilst at Oxford. He did not take to riotous living; he did not play practical jokes on the Dons, and if he spent a large sum of money on the hire of horse-flesh, why, that was an expenditure which the sporting old squire could of all others best excuse.

So Tony came back in high favour to live under the paternal roof.

But by the end of two years Sir Percival began to show symptoms of discontent. Sir Percival's health for some time past had been getting very infirm, and he had taken it into

his head that Tony ought to marry and secure an heir. This was the darling wish of the old man's heart and it grew to be a perfect craze ; for Tony was only three-and-twenty, and did not see matters at all in the same light. He loved hunting and shooting, and sport of every kind, and it seemed to him that a wife might interfere very considerably with his pursuing hounds six days a week, and finishing up the evening with a pleasant little nap in an arm-chair. Indeed, when he thought over the grave question of matrimony, he could not call to mind a single woman of his acquaintance whom he should like to make Mrs. Tollemache. They all frightened him, and were either so confoundedly clever, so embarrassingly friendly, or so ridiculously airified. Yes, there was one, though he had almost forgotten what she was like ; it was two whole years since he had seen her, and she might now be as bad as the rest of them—little Kitty Kinahan, with whom he had often played in his boyish days, and whom he still remembered as “a regular brick.”

But Kitty had been sent away to some



school in Germany—he did not approve of a foreign education for girls—and no doubt when she returned to her native land she would be transformed into a tight-waisted, giggly, frivolous young lady, like the majority of those he saw about in the world. And, young as he was, he vowed never to make one of these his wife.

Tony might not be clever, but he possessed a large amount of common sense, and in his quiet, bashful way was very observant. He did not care for “smart” girls, in the usual sense of the word. He thought them artificial, insincere, and altogether “bad form.” All the outward signs of big fringe, false hair, pink cheeks, red lips, white nose, tiny waist and voluminous dress-improver he viewed with suspicion. Kitty had none of these things before she left for school. It was a thousand pities she ever went. So mused Tony whenever he gave the subject a thought, which, however, was only at rare intervals.

It is the opening meet of the season. The fixture is at Tollemache Hall; and Tony, as he sits at breakfast, clad in a brand new

pink coat and spotless leathers, with his fresh, good-natured face full of joyous anticipation, looks very straight and goodly. Sir Percival, sitting opposite, gazes fondly at him. He himself is too much of an invalid to hunt any longer, but he takes as keen an interest in the sport as ever, and shows it by always having plenty of foxes in his coverts.

“What are you going to ride to-day, my boy?” he asks. “I forgot to inquire before.”

“Brilliantine in the morning,” replies the young man; “she’s very big, and wants work. In the afternoon, when we have got rid of the crowd, I shall change on to dear old Dragon.”

“Ah! you will be safely conveyed, and I hope some of these cubs may show you their heels. By-the-bye, Tony,” and he glanced at his son to see what effect the intelligence would produce, “Constance Fergusson is coming out to-day; I had a note from her father this morning.”

“Oh, indeed!” rejoined Tony, turning very red, though the tone of his voice betrayed little or no emotion; “I suppose she’ll only

potter about as usual. I wonder that girl hunts; she's so dreadfully nervous on horse-back; it can't be any pleasure to her."

"I don't think ladies ought to go too hard," said Sir Percival diplomatically; "they're pretty ornaments at the covert side, but when hounds run they are generally in the way"

"Some, not all. There was little Kitty Kinahan for instance. She could ride as well as any man. And lord! what nerves she had to be sure, I remember her jumping a five-barred gate when she was only fourteen."

"Kitty was always a little tom-boy," said Sir Percival shortly, "whereas Miss Fergusson is a most beautiful and accomplished young woman, whom I should be proud to welcome as my daughter-in-law."

Tony made no reply. He was quite aware of his father's preference for Miss Fergusson, and he had nothing to say against her; nevertheless he mentally characterized her as cold and haughty, and in spite of her good looks, which were undeniable, never felt quite at his ease in her presence. She gave him an uncomfortable sense of superiority. And Tony

did not like proud, clever girls. He did not mind their being stupid, if only they were jolly.

There was a slight pause. Then Sir Percival gave a little, embarrassed cough, and said :

“Tony, my boy, you know my wishes ; I need not press them any more, but if Miss Fergusson is out to-day I do hope and trust that you will pay her some attention.”

“Of course, of course, father,” he replied in an off-hand manner. “I’m always civil to her, when we happen to meet.”

“That’s right, Tony. I think she likes you, eh?”

“I’m sure I don’t know whether she does or does not. She’s not a girl to show her feelings.”

“Perhaps not, perhaps not. The better sort never do jump down a man’s throat ; it’s only the ones who are dying to get married at any cost ; but you take my word for it, Tony, she’s a sweet girl.”

“Very likely,” answered Tony, thinking it easier to acquiesce than to enter into an argument. “But there are a good many

different kinds of sweetness in this world." Whereupon he artfully changed the subject, and brought the conversation once more back to the far more congenial topic of sport.

A brave show assembled at Tollemache Hall that day. All the beauty and fashion of the country were gathered together before Sir Percival's hospitable doors, and many were the gallant men and fair women who turned up at the trysting-place. The Crackington hounds were ever a popular pack, but of late seasons the sport they had shown placed them quite in the foremost rank. So large was the concourse of people that it was considerably after the appointed time before a move could be effected. A fox soon showed in one of the laurel spinneys adjoining the house, and, though a faint-hearted brute, the speckled ladies rattled him in good style for the greater part of the forenoon. He afforded plenty of life and movement, though he obstinately declined to face the open, and people were to be seen galloping about Sir Percival's fine ancestral park in every direction.

It was impossible for folks to see each other

or indulge in much coffee-housing. Many of the dearest friends never even met. They were scattered about in every direction, and Tony had a good excuse for not paying his respects to Miss Fergusson. That young lady, clad in a perfectly-fitting habit, looked very handsome, and once or twice he saw her in the distance, but Sir Percival's exhortation had roused a spirit of contrariness, and he purposely kept aloof. He didn't see why he should be forced into marrying Constance Fergusson.

Thus the morning passed away, and ardent sportsmen had already begun to vote the proceedings "extremely slow." Accordingly, towards three o'clock, the huntsmen trotted off at a brisk pace to draw one of the crack coverts of the hunt, and no sooner had it been applied to than a magnificent old dog-fox stole away. Unfortunately he made his escape unperceived by the bulk of the field, and as he took to his heels in a manner that showed him to be no tyro at the game, a great many people were left behind.

Tony, amongst others, did not get a good start, but, by dint of hard galloping, and

thanks to a fast horse, he managed to catch up the pack before they had gone very far. The fox had set his mark straight for an unusually stiff line of country, and there was a burning scent. Hurrah! hurrah! They were in for a run. How glorious was the sensation, when one felt it again for the first time after many months. "Dragon, old man, don't pull quite so hard. You're on level terms with them now, and we won't let them best us again." Thus murmured Tony, as he leant forward and patted the bay's glossy neck. Meanwhile the fox was making the best of his way, and had already set a nasty bottom and two stiff ox-rails between himself and his adversaries. Dragon got over them safely, but he had to twist his strong hind-quarters in order to clear the last oxer. Tony's surprise was therefore considerable when he saw a female skirt fluttering ahead, and clearing each fence in succession, immediately in the wake of the huntsman. He gave Dragon rather an unnecessary touch of the spur, which that good horse resented with an indignant shake of his lean, thoroughbred head. Tony had a boy's dislike to being

beaten by a woman, deeming it terribly *infra dig.*

In another minute he was alongside, and took a shy but curious look at the fair Diana who was riding so well and boldly. He looked again. She had altered a bit, but still surely — yes — and his heart gave a bound which he could not understand at all—it *was* his old friend and playmate, Kitty Kinahan. He would have known her anywhere by the way she handled her horse.

“Bravo! Kitty,” he said, in approving tones, as he landed a little behind her, over a stiff, stake-bound fence. “I see you have not forgotten how to ride, in spite of the Germans.”

She turned round with a start of undisguised pleasure, as natural as it was spontaneous.

“Oh! Tony; is it you? I made sure I should have seen you at the meet, and was so disappointed not to have done so.” Then, as she noticed certain subtle changes in his aspect, that told her he had grown from a youth to a man since last she had addressed him in this familiar style, she coloured deeply



and added: "I beg your pardon, I was thinking of old times and forgot that I ought to call you *Mr. Tollemache* now."

Directly he heard the sound of her clear, innocent voice, he knew that she was the same jolly little thing with whom he had gone bird's-nesting and fishing when a boy, and whom he had been wont to order about exactly as he pleased. She had grown taller and more womanly looking, but in other respects he could detect no change. The brown eyes were as frank and honest, the laugh as ringing, the expression of the round, rosy face as bright and good-tempered as of yore.

"Nonsense," he said, with a smile. "You'll do no such thing. You'll just stick to Tony, as you've done all your life. *Mr. Tollemache*, indeed! What rubbish."

"But Tony, you've grown so tall and so imposing looking. I'm really afraid of you."

"Very well then, I'll call you Miss Kitty, or, better still, Miss Kinahan. Do you remember our paddling together in the burn, and your insisting on drying my feet with your little pocket-handkerchief? You were

just ten years old then—*Miss* Kinahan, and were not half so retiring in those days as you are now.”

She laughed, a merry, unconscious laugh, and from that moment ceremony vanished. As they tore through the fresh air and their horses flew over the flat pastures, he took another look at her, just to make sure he was right in his opinion. She was not the least pretty. He ascertained that fact without the smallest difficulty. Ninety-nine men out of a hundred would not have bestowed a thought upon her in Constance Fergusson's presence. She had a freckled complexion, and a big mouth, and a fleshy nose ; but the unmistakable good humour, honesty and vivacity stamped on her countenance were better than beauty in his eyes. Anyway, he preferred them greatly to Miss Fergusson's straight, classical features and proud bearing.

The only thing he thought open to improvement was Kitty's figure, but then no figure could look well in such a habit. It was a regular sight, and might have belonged to her grandmother, since it actually had pleats round the waist. No wonder Kitty's pro-

portions were sack-like and undefined. But she could sit a horse like no other girl, and although very indifferently mounted—as he could tell at a glance—managed to get over the country in wonderful style. And how she enjoyed hunting! How her brown eyes sparkled, and her plump cheeks glowed, as the pair threw fence after fence behind them, and the company grew more and more select. It was a pleasure to see a person so thoroughly and innocently happy. And what nerves she had, too! She did not seem to know what fear meant, but drove her cob along with unequalled skill and vigour.

These qualities were the more apparent because he was by no means such a hunter as a man would choose to cross Huntingshire upon; but Kitty's father was poor, and had a large family. His Irish rents were irregularly paid and he could not afford to mount his daughter well. The stout cob she was riding had to go between the shafts, and it was only occasionally that he could be spared for a whole day's hunting.

He jumped very well, when fresh, but he was naturally slow, and to-day the pace had

blown him. He rapped a piece of timber hard with all fours, landed on his head, almost recovered, staggered, then fell heavily forwards, pitching Kitty off on the near side. Luckily she fell clear, and was on her feet again in a minute.

“Go on, go on, Tony,” she called out. “Don’t lose the remainder of the run for me. I’m all right.”

But for once in his life, Tony suddenly became indifferent to the chase. He vowed he did not care whether they killed their fox or not. She was such a little brick, such a dear, good, plucky little soul that he was not going to leave her in the lurch when she came to grief. If he had had a fall, she would have stuck to him he felt sure, and he would do the same by her. So he pulled Dragon up to a standstill, remounted Kitty, though not without difficulty, and finally, when it was discovered to their joint consternation that the cob had fallen dead lame on the off fore—insisted on accompanying her home.

In fact, Tony was quite surprised at his own gallantry, but then Kitty did not count.

She was not like a formidable young lady, who set her cap at him, and asked him foolish questions, and frightened him out of his life. She could talk sensibly about dogs and horses, and enter into a man's pursuits, and liked hearing all about the coverts and the hounds, and what had happened in sporting circles during her absence. So they got on most amicably, and Tony found himself talking away nineteen to the dozen, whilst Kitty fell into her old *rôle* of listener. And all at once as they rode home together, it struck him that if he must have a wife, he would not so much mind marrying little Kitty Kinahan. She was a real, good sort, fond of hunting and honest country pursuits, and thoroughly practical. Moreover he felt sure that she would not hen-peck him, and he had his doubts how long he should retain the upper hand if he yielded to his father's wishes, and made up to Miss Fergusson. The idea was quite new, but it took such a hold upon him, that when he shook hands with Kitty at parting he said :

“By the way, are you coming to our hunt ball next month? You ought to; everybody will be there.”

“I don’t know,” she replied; “I only returned yesterday, and have not thought about it yet.”

“Oh, do come, because if you will I will too, although balls are not much in my line as a rule, and I’m a shockingly bad dancer.”

“Quite good enough for me, Tony,” she said with a laugh. “I’d rather ride than dance any day.”

This sentiment met with Mr. Tollemache’s highest approval. He turned very red, and was seized by a fit of shyness.

“Look here, Kitty,” he said, not summoning up sufficient courage to look her in the face, “send down to the station on the day of the ball, there’s a good girl.”

“What on earth for?” she enquired with innocent surprise.

“Only for a bouquet; I’m going to send you one from town. And I say, Kitty, if—if,” beginning to flounder terribly in his speech, “you wear my flowers at this ball, I shall take it as a sign that—er—that you like me, whereas if you leave them at home——” breaking off abruptly and bending down to

adjust a stirrup strap, which seemed suddenly to have gone wrong.

“Yes, if I leave it at home—what then, Tony?” and she looked at him with candid eyes.

“Never mind, nothing; there! Do you understand?”

It was difficult to do so from his words; but no doubt Kitty detected some deeper meaning in his flushed cheeks and softened voice, for all of a sudden her round young face turned as scarlet as his own. She was not quite sure, but she thought that she comprehended. If only they had looked into each other's eyes they might have removed any existing uncertainty, but this they were much too bashful to do. Their hearts fluttered curiously, but they parted without further explanations. Possibly none were needed. Young people have other language besides the voice.

A whole month elapsed, and although Tony's attentions to Kitty were not marked enough to give rise to comment, the girl was very happy, living in a paradise of her own, for she was almost sure that he cared for her

in spite of his odd, quiet ways. He had always been a sort of hero to her. From her earliest childhood she had loved him unconsciously, and now she loved him consciously. No expressions of affection escaped him, but instinct told her that he liked her better than he did any of the other girls about, and she felt so glad and so grateful. The only thing that distressed her was his wealth. She wished he had not a penny, just for her to show him that she was fond of him for his own sake.

As time slipped away and Tony became no more demonstrative she began to fix all her hopes upon the hunt ball. She had a belief that it would prove an epoch in her existence.

At length the long-expected day arrived. On the previous afternoon she had met Tony out walking.

"Don't forget to send to the station for that bouquet," he said with simulated unconcern. "You remember what I said?"

A thrill of pleasure ran through her frame.

"Yes, Tony, I remember. It was not likely that I should forget."

From an early hour Kitty was in a regular



fidget. She herself walked to the station after breakfast, in order to meet the first train from Town. Tony's flowers, *dear*, DEAR Tony, why, of course she would wear them.

"Is there a parcel or hamper for me—Miss Kinahan?" she asked, with a happy smile.

"No, nothing," was the reply.

She felt momentarily disappointed, but she had scarcely expected that the bouquet would arrive so soon. She would again contrive to meet the mid-day train. But at mid-day the same answer was forthcoming to her eager inquiry. There was but one more chance—at eight o'clock, and she coaxed old William, their solitary groom, to ride down to the station and bring back the anxiously-expected bouquet. He went, but returned without it. Poor Kitty was bitterly disappointed, and all the time she was dressing for the ball tortured herself by saying, "He does not care for me really; I was a fool to think that he did. I am so dowdy and so plain."

When she entered the ball-room she was silent and unusually subdued. Her dress, a new one, did not fit, and she was conscious of

looking her worst, for her eyes were red and her cheeks inflamed, and her hair, which she had tried to curl for the occasion, would not go right, but kept straggling about in all directions and falling over her nose. The very first person she met was Tony, looking as handsome as a young god in his red evening coat with its light silk facings. He came eagerly towards her, then stopped short as if looking for something. A blank disappointed look stole over his face, and he turned sharply away. "Tony, Tony!" rose to her lips, but she had not courage to utter the words. Then a wild flood of bitterness swept through the poor little girl's heart. She was so ugly and ill-dressed, and of course it was only natural when there were such numbers of pretty women present with lovely frocks and coquettish manners—women who knew how to flirt and attract men—that he should prefer them. And yet, for "old sake's sake" she thought he would have asked her to dance once. But he never came near her or gave any opportunity of explaining about the bouquet, and she spent a miserable evening. Tony danced the whole night with

Miss Fergusson or else sat out with her in a corner, whilst she had to twiddle round with men she did not care two straws about and pretend that she was enjoying herself immensely.

Her pillow was moist with scalding tears when she went to bed, and her heart ached as if a sharp knife had been run right through it. Balls indeed! If all balls were like this she vowed she never would go to another.

Next morning Constance Fergusson received a letter which occasioned her the greatest surprise. It was from Tony Tolle-mache, and it contained a formal proposal. The proposal, however, was most curiously worded, so much so that, being a sensible young lady, she determined to give herself a few hours for reflection before sending an answer. She was very fond of Tony. If she had consulted her own inclinations only she would have said "yes" there and then, but the stiffness of the letter made her pause. Instinctively she felt that the writer did not love her, and she was too proud to become the wife of any man who did not really care for her as she cared for him.

In this state of mental uncertainty she put on her hat and went to see Kitty Kinahan, her dearest friend, who lived close by. She found Kitty sunk in the depths of despair, and for a long time the girl refused to divulge the cause of her grief. But it is a great relief to unbosom oneself to some one, and little by little the whole story came out. "And, oh, Conny!" she concluded, throwing her arms round the other's neck and sobbing bitterly, "he *did* send the bouquet after all. There was some delay on the railway, and it turned up this morning. I am sure Tony was angry. I could see it by his face, and oh! dear, oh! dear, what on earth am I to do?"

"Do!" echoed Constance, firmly, though she turned very pale, "why, go to him, of course, and tell him exactly what has happened. He meant that if you wore the bouquet it would be a sign that you were fond of him, and that if you didn't you would have nothing to say to him. I see it all. You must explain."

"Oh! no, Conny, I can't, indeed I can't. It would be so horribly indelicate, and just think if you were mistaken. Why, I should

die of shame. Matters must stay as they are, though my heart is breaking.”

Constance gave a kind though rather wistful smile. She did not argue the point, but her mind was made up. Shortly afterwards she took leave of Kitty, kissing her affectionately and bidding her be of good cheer.

“Don’t cry,” she said. “Things will all come right in the end. You see if they don’t.”

And then the girl whom Tony thought so cold and haughty went straight home and wrote him a letter. She said “If you love me honestly and truly I am ready to become your wife, but oh! for Heaven’s sake, be sincere and tell me the truth. I cannot believe in your affection, but I do believe that you care for Kitty Kinahan, and have only proposed to me through some misunderstanding. She could not take your bouquet to the ball last night because it did not arrive till this morning. I know what passed between you, and, oh! Tony, if you love her and not me, make her your wife. She is a good, honest girl, and she loves you very dearly.”

When Tony got this letter he jumped up in

great excitement, and ordering a horse to be saddled, galloped off and had a long interview with Constance Fergusson.

What took place at it she never divulged, but from that day he never again called her either cold or proud. They parted the warmest of friends and he did not see the tears which rose to her eyes as she watched his straight back disappearing down the avenue, or heard the sad, soft voice that murmured, "I have done right, and he is happy, but oh! it was hard—very hard."

He rode to Kitty Kinahan's. He found that young lady in the lowest of spirits, but he managed to cheer her up most wonderfully, and left her all smiles and blushes.

Sir Percival was disappointed when he first heard the news. Kitty Kinahan was a little nobody, Irish moreover, and had not a drop of blue blood in her veins. She had no presence, no dignity, no looks. So he averred, much to Tony's indignation, who by this time was head over ears in love. But when he paid his future daughter-in-law a visit she won his kind old heart completely.

"Hulloa! young lady," he said to the

trembling girl, with a testiness half real and half assumed, "what's this I hear? Who gave you leave to run my son to ground in this audacious manner, eh?"

Kitty was frightened out of her wits, but she looked up into his face with a pair of shining eyes, and placing one little, timid hand on his sleeve, said :

"Oh! Sir Percival, don't be angry with me. I am not half good enough for Tony. I know that without being told, but he is so strong, and so brave, and so handsome that I could not help loving him. It was stronger than I. Indeed, indeed, I will do my very best to make him happy, if only you will forgive me for being fond of him." And then her voice died away to nothing, and she burst into tears.

Her utter humility disarmed the baronet. A strange huskiness impeded his utterance. He put his quivering hand on her glossy head and smoothed back the hair from her brow.

"My dear," he said, "you are a good girl, and I am not sure that Tony has not made a wise choice after all. Let us be friends." And when a year after their marriage Mrs. Anthony presented her loving husband with a

son and heir, the old squire's delight was complete. He was convinced that there was no such woman in the world as his daughter-in-law.

And Kitty kept her word.

She made Tony perfectly happy and he had never cause to regret marrying her.

Their lives are simple, honest, healthy.

They may not be a clever couple. There are people indeed who call them fools, for they know nothing, or next to nothing, of the *ologies* and the sciences, of spiritualism and æstheticism or any other *ism*. They love horses and dogs, stop at home and look after their children and their household, and are universally beloved by all those with whom they have any dealings. And, above everything, they suit each other. They are sensible and practical and don't expect impossibilities out of life.

It was a good day's work for both of them when, in Sir Percival's hearty hunting language, little, plump, good-natured Kitty Kinahan ran Tony Tollemache to ground, and in spite of his shyness secured the catch of the county.



Miss Arabella Whinborough called her a "nasty designing thing." But then pleasantness, unconsciousness, and sweetness of temper had succeeded where paint and powder had failed.

Constance did not marry for some years, but finally she accepted a noble widower and made a very beautiful and stately countess. She is always a welcome visitor at Tollemache Hall, and Tony treats her with peculiar tenderness and courtesy.

As for Sir Percival, everybody laughs at him and loves him for the way in which he dandles that precious baby, "just as if," say all the insulted matrons, "nobody had ever had a baby before!"

## HOW I BROKE MY NOSE.

DURING the winter of 188— I came home from India on leave, after having been five years absent from my native country. When I left it, I was a mere stripling. At six-and-twenty, I returned a man, both in thought and feeling. One dreary November day, on visiting my Club in Piccadilly, I found a letter from an old friend awaiting me.

“ Dear Charlie,” he wrote. “ What are you about? I want you to come here the first week in December, and have a look at the Combination hounds. Also you must go to our Hunt ball on the 15th. We are doing capitally this season; weather open, foxes plentiful, the young entry promising well; and, up till the time of writing, have had wonderful sport. I can manage you a mount now and again when the Stud are upright, and if the worst comes to the worst, there’s a first-rate old crock to be hired in Foxington. He has been nerved on both fore feet, and is

not the best of hacks, but there's no mistake about his jumping. Do come, there's a good fellow, if only to oblige, Yrs. ever, JOHN MARSHMAN."

Come indeed! I needed no second bidding. The blood tingled in my veins with delight, at the very thought of once more striding over the wide Leicestershire pastures. The winter before I went abroad, I had been quartered at Weedon; and under the burning Indian sun, many a time had my thoughts reverted, with fond regret, to that happy season of desperate riding, frequent falls and their consequent bruises. For ever after, I became enamoured of flying fences and a grass country. They represented in my eyes the height of human enjoyment. Dear old Jack! He little knew the pleasure he was conferring. How glad I should be too, to see his round, rosy face again! I wondered if it were rosy still, as in the olden days when he and I had been at Eton together. I sat down there and then, and accepted Jack's invitation. Time went very slowly in the interval that elapsed, before I was due at Dryfield Lodge, and so great was my impa-

tience, that even the purchase of sundry articles requisite for the chase, did not serve to make it go faster.

Every hunting man has of course heard of the Combination Hunt. Their fame is world-wide, and for several seasons past no hounds have shown such a succession of sport. Run followed run so surely, that people flocked to the country; every house within a radius of a dozen miles was occupied; and the fields became immense. Indeed they constituted the one drawback to this justly celebrated Pack.

On the appointed day, I arrived at Dryfield Lodge in the best possible spirits. Jack met me at the station.

“Awfully glad to see you, old chap,” he said, wringing my hand with an honest warmth which was peculiarly gratifying to an absentee like myself. “Awfully glad. We had a clipping good day on Tuesday. Ran right into the very heart of the Pytchley; a twelve-mile point as the crow flies. Only changed foxes once. Left off two-and-twenty miles from home. Hounds did not get back to the kennels until close upon nine o’clock.

A desperate hard day for horses," Jack wound up with a sigh.

"Had bad luck?" I ventured to inquire.

"Confounded bad luck. I lamed my best horse so badly that he won't be out again this season. At the present moment I've got eight out of fourteen on the shelf, and this is only our fifth week of regular hunting."

"You seem to have been very unfortunate," I observed sympathetically.

"Yes," he responded. "I did hope to have been able to mount you to-morrow, old man; but as things are, we shall have to call the services of the hireling into requisition."

"All right," I assented cheerfully. "No doubt he is quite good enough for me."

"Once get him to the meet," said Jack, "and a better horse never looked through a bridle; but he's an indifferent hack—very. However, I thought we could drive out to-morrow, and then my man can lead your hunter, save his fore-legs, and probably your neck."

Thus matters were arranged, when Jack's groom, a respectable, middle-aged man, came in for orders. After that, we dined, we

smoked, and talked hunting and nothing else, steadily all through the evening. I never spent a happier one, for it reminded me of old times, and I looked forward to the morrow with the keenness of a school-boy.

The next morning broke grey and dull. A gentle north-east wind stirred the topmost twigs of an ash-tree that shaded my bed-room window. A few dead leaves still fluttered upon them, shrivelled and twisted into fantastic shapes. Jack's good roan pony, harnessed to a light, two-wheeled cart, took us out to covert in something less than an hour, the distance being about ten miles. He blew the fresh air from his nostrils, whisked his square tail, and stepped out bravely. It was a pleasure to whirl along past the black fences, garnished here and there with red berries, and jump each one in imagination. Never was there so fine a Pegasus.

When we reached our destination, the hounds had already arrived, and were congregated on a grassy plot in the centre of a red-brick village. They looked in splendid condition, lean, but full of muscle, with coats like satin, and strong, sinewy limbs. I was

still gazing at them rapturously, when Jack's groom came up, leading my horse. I cast an eye over him, and perceived with pleasure that he had all the points of a good hunter: sloping shoulders, short back, and powerful, well-let-down hocks. Two hundred guineas would not have bought him, had his fore-legs been sound. They, alas! were round, full-jointed, covered with blemishes, and tottered and shook under the poor beast in a manner quite pitiful to behold.

"Ee's all right, Sir, once 'ee warms up, Sir," said Jack's man, confidentially, patting the old horse's neck. "A bit pottery at starting, but it soon wears horf, and when hounds run, 'ee'll carry you with the best of 'em."

And hounds did run that day with a vengeance. In all my subsequent experience of fox-hunting, never do I remember a better scent. They had scarcely begun to draw the first covert, before they were out of it again, clamouring murderously at the heels of a fine old dog fox, who had to extend himself in rare style, in order to escape from the threatening jaws of his canine foes. Riders,

however, owing to their unwarrantable eagerness, pressed the pack unmercifully, and this enabled Reynard to get a fair start, which subsequently stood him in good stead. We pushed, shoved, jostled and squeezed through a hand-gate—the curse of Leicestershire—and then, like an avalanche let loose, scattered far and wide in the green field beyond.

Hurrah! Now for a run. Hats are crammed down, reins shortened, cigars thrown away. A chorus of music fills the air, but before many minutes have passed, hounds settle fairly to their work and run mute, with straight sterns and heads carried high. Before long, the jumping capabilities of my mount are put to the test. I have already discovered that he can gallop, and is in hard condition. A stiff stake and bound fence looms ahead, evidently but newly laid. Its proportions are formidable, at least they seem so to me, a stranger on an unknown hireling. The huntsman gets over handsomely, and calls out to his followers, to put on the pace. I act on his advice, and to my unbounded satisfaction, land cleverly over a stout oxer, that brings half-a-dozen good



men and true to grief. For the oxer is far out, and there is a big ditch on the take-off side. Now, I have every confidence in my horse, and send him along in good earnest. The pace renders it necessary, for the hounds are simply racing, and it takes us all we know to keep within sight of their sterns. To my surprise, at this juncture, I perceive a habit fluttering, about twenty yards ahead. The wearer of the habit—I can only see her back—has a tall, slim figure, with an exceedingly pretty waist. She takes fence after fence in a manner that excites my curiosity. Who is this fair Diana who rides so boldly and so well? Apparently she scorns a pilot, and several times picks a place of her own. I am not altogether sure that I approve of women hunting, especially when they go hard; but there is something so quiet and lady-like about this particular one, that for the life of me I can't help admiring her. I think the nice back "fetched" me. Had it been ugly, and like an old groom's, no doubt it would have inspired very different sentiments. "She must be young," I kept saying to myself, "and strong, and blessed with

wonderful nerve, else she never could ride as she does. I wonder what her face is like. I wish I could get a peep at it."

But I couldn't. - It did not take me long to ascertain that the beautiful thoroughbred chesnut she was riding had the legs of my worthy hireling—good horse as he undoubtedly was.

On, on we flew, racing at our fences in regular steeplechase form, with scarce a moment in which to steady the nags. Their necks were flecked with foam, their flanks heaved, and many were those who lost their pride of place. A momentary check now took place in a ploughed field—the first we had entered that day. But it was all too short for sobbing horses. Almost immediately the pack again swung after their prey, bearing to the right.

The heavy ground did not suit my steed. The necessity of sparing him was rapidly becoming apparent. I took him by the head, and jumped him over a nasty, hairy fence with a drop into a sound grass meadow beyond. It was a fortunate nick, for the hounds came straight to me. The huntsman

and I led the field, for a brilliant quarter-of-an-hour that ensued. My horse was a bit blown, but he jumped well to the last. With a pair of new forelegs he would have been worth five hundred guineas; even as it was, I secretly resolved to purchase him if his owner would part with him at anything like a moderate figure.

But ha! what's this, shining like a silver streak in yonder field, fringed by two dark lines of pollard willows? Water, by Jove! I stick my spurs into the bay's streaming sides, and drive him hard at it without a moment's hesitation. It is my only chance of getting over, for his bolt, by now, is pretty nearly shot. Wide and deep looks the chasm, as he pauses irresolute for one agonizing second, then changes his feet, and jumps. He either lands short, or else the bank gives way beneath him. Anyhow, he tumbles down on his knees, flinging me to earth.

Before I have time to recover, there comes a whizz—a whirr; I look up, see four chesnut hoofs in the air, and a pepper-and-salt habit skirt, then—something strikes me a

stunning blow on the face, and my horse and I fall backwards into the ice-cold stream. The water brings me to my senses sooner than might otherwise have been the case. I scramble to the bank, wet, hurt, and indignant, just in time to see the lady on the chesnut horse gaily pursuing her brilliant career with the hounds. The blood was trickling down my face. I put up my hand to feel my nose, which appeared the chief seat of injury. Goodness gracious! Why, where had it gone? I seemed to have no nose left. It was literally battered down on my right cheek, and reduced to a mass of bleeding pulp. I knew, without being told, that the unfortunate member, on which, by-the-way, I rather prided myself, was broken.

Now I hope I am neither vainer nor more vindictive than my neighbours, but when I ascertained the extent of my disaster—lost the end of a first-class run, got wet to the skin, damaged a brand-new hat, and underwent considerable personal pain into the bargain, I must say, I did not feel over charitably inclined towards that young lady. She could not help knowing that she had hurt me, and

for her to ride carelessly off, without a word of apology, just as if men were so many wooden nine-pins to be ruthlessly bowled over, was in my humble opinion, "shocking bad form." But there, these hunting women all get brutalized. The majority were scarcely feminine.

When Jack came up, which he shortly did, hearing I had met with an accident, we vied with each other in our expressions of indignation. The young woman's ears in the pepper-and-salt habit ought to have tingled.

"Upon my soul," cried Jack, "I never saw such a thing in my life. It was infamous. There's no other word for it."

"Who is she? Where does she come from?" I inquired, crumpling my blood-stained handkerchief into a ball.

"I don't know, unless it be the Birmingham heiress with twenty thousand a year, who has taken Grangecross Towers in the Quorn country. But I've never seen her, and can't tell you what she's like. You ought to be able to describe your bone-breaker, Charlie, and then I'll make it my business to show her up."

"No," I answered, "I can't. I never saw anything but her back. *It* was decidedly pretty, but, of course, her face might have been hideous. All through the earlier part of the run she was going like a bird."

"I've half a mind to write to the newspapers," said Jack wrathfully, "One might send a very good article to the *Field* and *County Gentleman* entitled, 'The fair sex taking to man-murdering,' 'In place and out of place,' or something of that sort."

"It would serve her right," I said resentfully, for by this time my nose was exceedingly painful.

Directly we reached home, Jack sent for a doctor, and I endured an agonizing ten minutes whilst he propped the injured member up, by means of splints introduced into the nostrils. They produced a horrible fit of sneezing, which greatly intensified my sufferings. And the acuter they became the angrier I grew with that girl. If she had only pulled up, and said she was sorry for the mishap, my feelings would not have been half so vindictive, but to go riding on without ever caring whether she had killed me or

not—well, in spite of her pretty straight back, she must be a wretch. Jack's opinion on this point confirmed mine.

For a whole week, I never once looked in the glass without a strong sense of resentment coming over me. Ordinary observation teaches us, that a nose is about the most important feature of the human face. Mine really had been a good nose ; straight, well-formed, and aquiline ; and now it was totally spoilt. It had thrown out *periosteum*, and, in spite of the tenderest attention from its owner, remained decidedly crooked. This was the more annoying on account of the ball. At first I vowed I would not go to it, declaring I should be mistaken for a prize-fighter, but Jack, after much persuasion, finally induced me to alter my decision.

The very first person I met on entering the ball-room was an old school-fellow of mine, talking to a remarkably pretty girl. To tell the truth, the girl was so pretty that I did not welcome honest William Cruickshank with the effusion I would otherwise most undoubtedly have displayed. She was tall, with a perfect figure—slender, yet round. She

had the loveliest arms I ever saw, white, with a sweet dimple at each elbow, instead of a sharp red bone straining through the skin, such as one so often not only sees but feels when dancing. Her hair was light brown, soft as spun silk, and her deep, dove-like eyes were as charming as they were beautiful. She wore a grey ball-dress spangled with silver, adorned by clusters of shaded roses. Above it, her polished shoulders gleamed like a piece of exquisite sculpture.

When she saw me, she blushed a painful vivid crimson, and evidently asked some question of her companion. Upon his answering it, she appeared to whisper a request into his ear. Cruickshank nodded, and addressing me, said :

“Charlie, old boy, I want to introduce you to Miss Vansittart. Miss Vansittart, Captain Lethbridge.”

Delighted at obtaining the chance, I asked her for a dance, and, to my no small satisfaction, she gave me the next one. A few minutes later, the lively strains of a popular waltz struck up, and I sought my partner. I led her into the room, and was about to put



my arm round her waist, when she drew back.

"I don't want to dance with you," she said, much to my astonishment. "I want to talk to you instead."

"Oh," I said, rather huffily. "I suppose you don't like to be seen with such a disreputable-looking individual. Allow me to assure you, however, that I have not been fighting. My scars were honourably earned, but *dishonourably* inflicted in the hunting field."

Miss Vansittart made no answer to this speech, and as I felt rather ashamed of it as soon as I had made it, I conducted her to a little sitting-room where we were quite alone. My partner sat down, twitched for a long time at her pocket-handkerchief, and at last said tremulously :

"Now, please scold me."

"Scold you !" I echoed, thinking she must be a trifle touched in the head. "What on earth do you mean ?"

But even as I spoke a light flashed across my brain. Was this the female foe, the odious, hard, unsexed, hunting woman

against whom I had been railing for days? A twinge of remorse made itself felt in the region of my heart.

Miss Vansittart's lip quivered, and to my dismay, two great slow tears rolled down her cheeks.

"It was I—I who did it," she said huskily. "I can't think how it happened. My horse is very impetuous, and yours just checked at the critical moment. But that is no excuse for me. I don't wish to defend myself in any way—I did not give you room enough, and then—and then," she went on, more and more unsteadily, "I was so miserably—so *deadly* ashamed of myself that I dared not look you in the face——"

"Please don't say any more," I interrupted. "The thing is over and forgotten. Let by-gones be by-gones."

"But I can't. Oh, Captain Lethbridge, what must you have thought of me? I rode away to try and hide my shame, but of course you could not know that. It seemed to me next door to an insult, when one had almost killed a man to go up to him, and say, 'Oh! I am so sorry,' just as if the words

were enough to smooth everything over. I endeavoured to find out your name, so that at least I might write, but nobody knew it, apparently. And now," she concluded, crossing her little gloved hands with touching meekness, "abuse me as much as you choose. Call me every bad name under the sun. Hit hard. It will do me good, for there is nothing harsh you can say, that I am not conscious of fully deserving."

All this was uttered rapidly, and with evident effort. Her nerves were in a state of tension. I felt an almost unconquerable inclination to take her in my arms there and then, and stop her sweet mouth with a kiss. I have often wondered since what she would have said. She tells me now, that she does not think she would have been so very, *very* angry.

We sat in that little room nearly all night. We seemed to have such an immense deal to say to one another, and for my part I honestly admit I never enjoyed a ball so much before.

Perhaps you guess the sequel.

When I left Jack Marshman's hospitable

roof I was engaged to the nicest, dearest girl in creation. She made up for breaking my nose by becoming my wife. It was indeed a lucky day for me when Violet Vansittart sent me flying into the Clutterworth Brook. The good old bay hireling also profited, for he secured a comfortable home. I have not mentioned it until now, but Violet turned out to be the Birmingham heiress after all. I am glad I did not know it at the time, or I never should have had the "cheek" to propose.

Jack and I, on talking matters over, came to two conclusions. First and foremost that it was just as well we did not send that sparkingly spiteful article to the newspapers, which between us we had nearly composed; and secondly that the way people misjudge their neighbours in this world is very remarkable. We drew a moral from the latter fact. Perhaps you may too.

"Charity suffereth long and is kind."

## GAME UNTIL DEATH.

I WONDER whether any of you realize what it is to be an old horse.

Now-a-days there is very little reverence shown for age, and even men and women, when past their prime, are apt to find themselves neglected and relegated to the shelf by the rising generation. They are greatly to be pitied, but I venture to assert that an old hunter, used to good oats, warm clothing, and stabling, is a still more fitting object for compassion. When he can no longer work, he no longer inspires affection, and his owner's one thought is nearly always how best to get rid of him. The past counts for nothing. From our point of view it is very sad.

I need not tell you my history from the beginning. It would take up too much time, and probably only weary you before you came to the end. Suffice it that, at seven years of age, I was sold by auction at Messrs.

Warner, Sheppard, and Wade's yard in Leicester. I had been well ridden and schooled, and was rightly described as a finished performer over any country. My owner had bred me himself, and hunted me in the Shires for three seasons, and I am not going beyond the mark in saying, that I knew my work thoroughly.

It was a great grief to me, when one autumn my master fell seriously ill of inflammation of the lungs, and was ordered to spend the winter in Egypt. All his stud went to the hammer, and I was among the number. Although I say it, who should not, we were as fine a lot of horses as one could wish to see anywhere. Hunting people from far and wide came to have a look at us; and the general verdict seemed to be, that I was the pick of the basket. I had youth on my side, whilst most of my companions were aged. They were nearly all old favourites, who had carried my master well for several seasons; for he was not one of those gentleman who delight in chopping and changing. When he got us and was satisfied with us, he liked to keep us. As he rode hard, and we

were known horses, we fetched extremely high prices. The sale was a *bona-fide* one, and the time of year right for buying hunters. The consequence was, we averaged two hundred and sixty guineas apiece, and although not strictly speaking up to fourteen stone, I realized the top price of three hundred and eighty-five. As it happened, I had won our Hunt Cup in the spring, also a point to point race, and bore a high character both for stamina and speed.

Although my master was much gratified at the result of his sale, he did not at all like parting with us ; and when he came to the box where I was standing, patted my neck and said—"Good-bye, Solomon, old boy. I shall never have a ride to hounds on you again, worse luck!" I could tell by the tone of his voice that he felt the separation sorely.

I know I did ; for ever since I could first remember he had always been a good, kind master to me, and often, out hunting, I congratulated myself on having such a one, when I saw the way some of them behaved. I thrust my nose into the palm of his hand, and whinnied softly, just so as to tell him

that the grief was not entirely on his side. In fact, I was genuinely sorry to say good-bye, for it is a great mistake to think that animals are not sensible to kindness.

This good man turned on his heel, and I never set eyes on him again. I heard later that his trip abroad did not benefit his health as had been expected, and he died the following spring. Peace be to his remains.

Looking back, I don't think many horses have been as fortunate as myself. When I left my first home, I quite made up my mind that I should go to one I liked less. The contrary proved the case. It seemed I had been bought by a very rich, elderly nobleman, who had recently married a young and beautiful wife, of whom he was extremely proud. Lady Hazeldine was passionately fond of hunting, and her husband gave me to her on her one-and-twentieth birthday. Probably he knew that the gift of a good horse would be far more acceptable than diamonds. She had ridden all her life, and was a bold and fearless rider. I had never carried a lady before, and at first felt a bit awkward. The weight appeared so one-



sided, and in addition I missed the pressure of a pair of spurred and booted legs. I soon got accustomed to the difference, however, and discovered that, despite the disadvantages of a side saddle, they were amply atoned for by the superiority of feminine hands. I can't say enough in praise of my mistress'. They were so wonderfully light, and so entirely in sympathy with my sensitive mouth. In olden days, my master frequently did not give me enough rein, in consequence of which, when I neared a fence, I would throw up my head impatiently, so as to secure more freedom. But with Lady Hazeldine, this was never necessary, she seemed to tell by instinct the exact moment when it was desirable to loose my mouth, and in jumping she never touched it. Indeed her habit was, whenever we came to an extra big place, to leave everything to my sense, and allow me to negotiate it precisely as I pleased.

I considered this wise conduct on her part, for I had no more wish to fall than she, and you may be sure always did my best. The consequence was, I carried her brilliantly,

and many an honourable mention was there in the sporting newspapers of my lady and her gallant chesnut.

To get on with my story, she hunted me regularly for six seasons, and in all that time I only put her down twice, and then through no fault of my own. On one occasion, there had been a very severe frost, which left the ground in a dangerous state, and I slipped up on landing ; on the second we were cannoned against by a stranger on a pulling horse, and knocked over. We got to know each other so well that we were just like two friends, and knew our respective merits and demerits to a nicety. A perfect confidence subsisted between us. Wherever she pointed my head, I was ready to go, feeling sure that she would never make any unfair demand upon my powers. On the non - hunting days, Lady Hazeldine would come into the stables, and feed me with carrots and sugar, uttering words of affection meanwhile, which thrilled me to the heart. Gladly would I have laid down my life in her service, for I loved her truly and well.

I was never so pleased as when we had

some extra good run, and I came home tired, but happy in the consciousness that I had carried my beloved mistress to her satisfaction, and right up in front, where she always liked to be. Ah! those were happy years. Forgive me if I seem a little prosy, but they are pleasant to recall, and the brightest period of one's life goes all too quickly. The summit of the ladder once reached, there is nothing for it but to descend, and the process is always disagreeable. I like to dwell on my palmy days, but it was not in nature that they should last.

There came a very severe winter's hunting. The weather was unusually open. It rained nearly every day, and the ground was uncommonly deep. Many people declare that when the going is heavy, horses' limbs seldom suffer, but speaking from personal experience, I hold an exactly contrary opinion. For my part, I hate galloping over a swamp, and infinitely prefer nice, dry turf. During this particular season, the fields often resembled a quagmire, and the sticky mud clung to one's heels every step that one took. Never had I felt so tired. To keep up with hounds when

they ran fast—and, owing to the moisture, there was an astonishing scent—was downright hard work. Lots of my acquaintances in the hunting field succumbed, and all were agreed that they never remembered so trying a winter. They would have hailed a fortnight's frost with relief, but the weather continued curiously damp and mild. The cripples got no chance of coming round, and those of us who kept upright had to do double duty. For the first time in my career, I began to sicken of hunting, and long for the spring primroses to appear. The result of this incessant call on my strength was that my legs now took to filling, a thing they had never done before; but, though I missed my turn once or twice, I struggled on to the end of the season. The last day, when I looked forward to a rest, a most unfortunate thing happened—at least as far as I was concerned. We had a tremendous run, the kind of run that only comes once in a lifetime. From start to finish, the point was seventeen miles, and hardly a horse but what was reduced to a trot.

After running for over two hours, we spied

our fox crawling down the side of a ploughed field. The sight roused the hounds to madness, and put enthusiasm into the pursuers. I pricked my ears, and managed to raise a canter, when suddenly I felt a twinge, and then something give way in my fore leg. A minute later, we bowled the hunted quarry over in the open, and I was among the select half-dozen who assembled to see the finish. Out of a field of some three or four hundred who had started from the covert where we found, we were all who remained to assist at the obsequies. It was a glorious day, but oh! how I wish it had come earlier in the season, when I was fresh and well.

My mistress was delighted with this grand run, and kept patting my steaming neck all the time the fox was being broken up.

We stood thus for about ten minutes, and I was thankful for the rest. Meanwhile, as my body gradually cooled, and the excitement of the chase passed away—in addition to a deadly lassitude, I became conscious of a burning pain in my fore-leg. We were five-and-twenty miles from home, for we had run

right out of our country, and Lady Hazeldine, to my relief, determined to return by train. Fortunately, there happened to be a station within a mile, for when we moved onwards I was so lame that I could scarcely hobble. My mistress sprang to the ground in alarm, calling out to a friend who was close by :

“Oh, dear! What on earth is the matter with Solomon? Not for the best run ever known would I have anything go wrong with him.”

The gentleman dismounted, stooped, and said gravely :

“I fear he has broken down badly in the near fore-leg. As far as I can tell the suspensory ligament appears to have given way.”

“Oh, poor boy! Poor, dear, old Solomon!” she cried, in heart-broken accents. “I would give a thousand pounds if this had not happened. I feel as if it were my fault—as if I had ridden you too hard. Solomon, Solomon! Why did not you let me know you were tired? You ought to have given in like the other horses. I shall never, *never* forgive myself.”

Bless her dear heart! Nothing would persuade her to get on my back again. She walked every step of the way to the station holding up her muddy habit with her two little gloved hands. I followed like a dog. There were not many places where I would not have followed *her*, for to me the best sight in all the world was the sight of her sweet pretty face, with its clear eyes and tender smile. Usually it looked so bright and happy, but it wore a very sad expression now, and miserably uncomfortable as I felt, it was a satisfaction to me to see how genuinely she cared for me. My mishap had evidently destroyed the pleasure of the run, and as I limped along, the tears rolled down her cheeks.

I reached home in a sorry plight, for the railway journey made me stiff and cold. When Marshall, the stud-groom, saw me he shook his head.

"Humph!" he said gloomily, "I'm afraid poor Solomon is done for this time."

"Oh, no, no!" said my Lady, trying to restrain her sobs. "Don't say that, Marshall. We have the whole summer before us, and

you are so clever. You must do all you can, for if I live to be a hundred, I shall never get another hunter like him. He's worth his weight in gold. He does not know what it is to turn his head, and a child could ride him."

"I'll try my utmost to patch him up, my Lady," said Marshall; "but I sadly fear that the greatest service we can render the poor old horse is to put a bullet through his head. He's a good 'un; but they won't last for ever."

At these words Lady Hazeldine put her handkerchief to her eyes, and went away, crying bitterly.

Well! Marshall blistered my unfortunate leg twice without any much better result than inflicting a vast amount of pain, and then I was turned out to grass. I liked that. The weather was beautiful; neither too hot, nor too cold. The country looked exquisitely fresh and green, and everywhere the fields were starred with white daisies and yellow buttercups. I did nothing but eat and lie down; lie down and eat. When the great heat came, I was put into a roomy loose box



during the day, and turned out at night when the sun had set. Thus I escaped the flies, which otherwise would have proved very tormenting. I improved so much, that when the autumn came, Marshall conditioned me with the other horses, though he only gave me walking exercise, and took care never to put a man on my back. My mistress was away all this time, but she came home just before the opening day, and was delighted to see me looking so fat and well.

"Will he stand, Marshall?" she enquired of the stud groom.

"I'm sure I can't say, my lady," was the response. "We can but try, and if the worst comes to the worst, he'll have to go to the kennels."

"No, no," she said shudderingly. "If it must be a bullet, it shall be a bullet at home."

This was the second time that the subject had been introduced in my presence, and it did not tend to raise my spirits. After the above conversation they became very low, and instead of hailing the hunting season with delight, I looked forward to it with

much anxiety, for one fact was patent. If I broke down for the second time something terrible would happen. At first, my mistress left me in, because Marshall said the ground was too hard, but one day he pronounced the going to be first-rate, and I was led out to the meet.

Ah! it did my heart good to see the hounds again. I forgot all my sorrows, and once more felt quite young and light-hearted. There they were, the speckled beauties, clustering round the huntsman, waving their slender sterns to and fro. I snorted with pleasure, and determined that, if I died for it, I would carry my dear mistress in her accustomed place.

At starting, everything went well. We found a cub, who did not run far, and the country being still very blind, no one jumped more than necessary. But about one o'clock, we trotted off to a great stronghold of foxes, named Brington Welpool, and there we routed out a real tough old customer. He led us over a tremendously stiff country. First, he swept round to the right by Stainton and Gloseby Woods, then he ran through the village of

Charlton, and crossed the brook, which we fortunately hit off at a ford, and finally he made straight for Plowden Vale, famed for its strong oxers and yawning ditches. I don't think I ever jumped a bigger country, and on all sides people were tumbling about like ninepins. My blood was fairly up, and without vanity I went on as well as in the olden days. My mistress was enchanted, and between every fence cooed words of encouragement in my ear. A horse may be ever so good, but it is a great thing for him to be well ridden. I was quite sensible of this, and whenever people praised my performances, I always realised that quite half their praise was due to Lady Hazeldine.

We might have been running for about three quarters of an hour, and our fox was rapidly getting beat. He now left the big ox pastures with their formidable fences, which had led to so much grief, and took to turning and twisting round the village of Plowden. But we were too close behind him; even in barns and sheds there was no place of refuge for the poor brute. Relentlessly we drove him on. A little distance

beyond the village stood a small, neatly-kept gentleman's place. The hounds dashed up a side approach, evidently much used by carts, since two extremely deep ruts were cut in the narrow roadway. And now my heart beat triumphantly. We had overcome the chief dangers of the run, and up till the present my leg did not pain me more than usual, though what it would do later on remained to be seen. The field were pretty nigh squandered, and only the huntsman, Lady Hazeldine, and some dozen good men and true, were really in the front rank, for the pace throughout had been severe, and, as before mentioned, the fences had proved a size larger than usual.

With a chorus of hound music ringing in our ears, we turned down the lane at full speed. The ruts, however, were very nasty for galloping, and one had to look where one went. I was going along cautiously but safely, when a tearing, rushing animal tried to force his way past, and catching me on the quarter, knocked me right into the narrow ditch which bordered the hedge on my right. My heels went from under me

with a jerk, my fore-feet stuck fast in the rut, and over I rolled on the ground. It was the work of a second. Fortunately Lady Hazeldine escaped unhurt. She jumped to her feet, none the worse, and called to me by name to rise. I heard her quite well, but alas! What was wrong? I could not obey the summons. A darkness as of night had suddenly descended upon my senses.

Through a haze I saw my mistress's dear flushed face, and her beautiful eyes gazing at me with a look of concern. Then, as in a dream, I heard a masculine voice exclaim :

“ By Jingo ! What an extraordinary accident ! Who would have thought it possible ? but poor old Solomon has broken his back ! ”

At the words a great sense of thankfulness and peace stole over my spirit. The Creator of all things had not forgotten me, and my Future was secure, inasmuch as never more need there be a question of the kennels and a bullet.

In the midst of the fight I had fallen, with the glow of the Chase still swelling in my

veins, with the deep notes of the hounds booming murderously in my ears, and with the sight of my gracious Lady cheering the last outlook on earth that I should ever have.

Do not pity me. It is well, nay, more than well. I am content to go thus—a few impotent struggles—a growing insensibility to pain, and Solomon will not require the bullet with which he was threatened. Good-bye, dear mistress—good-bye! You will shed a tear for me, I know.

## THAT YANKEE CHAP.

"I GUESS that is the girl whom I mean to marry."

"Nonsense, my dear fellow. You are joking, surely. People don't make up their minds to enter the bonds of matrimony so casually."

"I repeat that is the girl whom I mean to marry," reiterated Burr Trench, with additional emphasis. He was an American by birth, and spoke with a twang, which, although not sufficiently pronounced to be disagreeable, nevertheless unmistakably proclaimed his nationality.

"Why, you don't even know who she is," said his companion, giving a smile of amusement. He was a fair-haired, fair-complexioned young Englishman, who just now was looking his best in a scarlet hunting coat and faultless leathers.

"No," came the quick reply, "but I reckon that's easily ascertained. As a rule, it's not very difficult to find out the name of a pretty girl."

The speakers were standing on some stone steps leading to a noble hall, which belonged to one of the finest country seats in the whole of Grasslandshire. They were watching the various arrivals as they congregated on a large grass plot in front of the house, where hounds and huntsmen had established themselves a few minutes previously. The carriage drive was dotted with scarlet and white, vehicles of every description, and numerous pedestrians hastening to the meet. Altogether, it was a thoroughly characteristic sight, not to be seen anywhere save in Great Britain. So thought Burr Trench, as his eye rested admiringly on the picturesque and animated scene. It dwelt with a sense of pleasure on the green, undulating park, studded with fine trees, whose knotted branches showed in high relief against the faint blue, wintry sky, and on the still sheet of shining water glittering in the morning sunlight. The well-groomed horses, with their glossy coats and swelling muscles, made the blood run quick in his veins, and provoked an intense sympathy with the spirit of the chase. Since his childhood



upward he had eagerly read every book connected with Sport on which he could lay hands. The goal of his ambition had always been to come over to England and enjoy a season's fox-hunting. So strong was this desire that nothing could check it; and seeing such was the case, Mr. Trench senior ultimately consented to gratify his son's wish. Burr's father had amassed an enormous fortune as a general store-keeper. He was not ashamed of his profession. On the contrary, he frequently alluded with pride to the fact of his being entirely a self-made man, who had risen from the ranks by shrewdness, energy, and industry. "A fellow is of mighty little account who has not earned his money himself," he was wont to assert. "Any fool can be born and inherit a fortune, but I reckon it's not everybody as can make one."

In spite of this sentiment, however, he was bent on his only son being educated as, and occupying the position of, a gentleman. A 'cute, typical American was old Mr. Trench, and once having decided to give in to Burr's sporting tastes, he made up his mind that if the young man were to hunt at all, he must

hunt in style, and cut a regular dash amongst those stiff, insular Englishmen, who gave themselves so many airs, and who even dared to sneer occasionally at their brethren of the Stars and Stripes. Consequently, Mr. Trench instructed an English agent to look out for the very finest place situated in the most fashionable hunting county to be had for money. "None of your gimcrack, novel mansions," he wrote, "but a real ancestral residence."

It happened precisely at this period that a great Grasslandshire magnate was desperately hard up. All the good old county families in England *are* hard up nowadays, unless they are fortunate enough to possess interest in a brewery or a bank. The Earl of Fieldborough had none, and like a great number of his fellow-peers, of late years he had begun to find land a dubious blessing. It did not pay as in the good old days. The conditions of labour and tillage were altered, and the majority of his farms were either untenanted or else let at such ruinous prices that he might just as well have made a free gift of them to their occupiers. Little by little his income dwindled until he found it

impossible to maintain Fieldborough Castle, and the huge establishment of servants and retainers which a continued residence there entailed. Sorrowfully and reluctantly he perceived the necessity of retrenchment. It was hard, for he had been accustomed to so much, but, by some mysterious process, times were changed, the world was no longer what it was in his young days, and there seemed no help for it. Like a wise and prudent general, therefore, his lordship seriously meditated retreating from a fortress which he was unable to hold, and retiring to a smaller and more tenable one.

Then Messrs. Slumley, Farbrook, and Slumley, the well-known agents in Pall Mall, sent a representative from town to look at the Castle, and a few weeks later made him a magnificent offer for it on behalf of an American millionaire. The offer was so good that Lord Fieldborough dared not refuse it; but the poor man suffered cruelly in leaving the home of his forefathers, the home which until this unhappy day had never been let, and where for generations past Fieldboroughs had lived uninterruptedly. He talked of

going abroad, but when it came to the pinch, he was too much attached to the neighbourhood to leave it, and ultimately took up his abode in a small dower house situated just outside the park gates of his own mansion. To a haughty British aristocrat, whose veins were bursting with blue blood, this was a very bitter pill to swallow, but worse was still to come. When the agreement was drawn up, and submitted to old Mr. Trench for his signature, that astute individual saw his opportunity of making a favourable entry into Society, and refused to sign it unless subject to one condition—the Earl of Fieldborough must pledge himself to introduce his tenants to the county as personal friends.

“I know what you English people are,” wrote the old man, “and I don’t choose to come among you and be looked down upon. I am quite willing to pay a big rent, but I am not willing that my son should be received as a stranger, and treated as an outsider.”

“The brute!” exclaimed Lady Rosa Grasslands viciously, as her father made known this stipulation to his only daughter. “It is bad enough in all conscience for the horrid

old wretch to turn us out of house and home, but it is perfectly monstrous for him to dictate terms, and bargain to be introduced in the county as if he belonged to our own set. You won't agree to this demand, papa, surely?" And she looked at him with a pair of indignant blue eyes, shaded by very long, soft lashes.

Lady Rosa was like a thoroughbred filly, slim and graceful, and full of quality. Her slender white throat, proud little head, and finely-formed hands and feet, betrayed high lineage. In addition, her face was fair, and fresh, and good to look at. The eyes, if angry now, were very pretty eyes, clear and honest as a child's; and her smile was peculiarly attractive.

"You surely won't agree, papa?" she said again, even more urgently than before, drumming with her long fingers on the table, as to her consternation she perceived that he hesitated. "The request is simply preposterous, and we should lower ourselves by acceding to it."

A dull flush rose to his brow, and spread until it lost itself amongst the roots of his sparse grey hair. It struck her that he was

looking unusually worried and careworn, and her heart ached when she recalled how much he had aged of late.

Lord Fieldborough pushed back his chair, took off his spectacles, and wiped them with a silken pocket handkerchief, sighing heavily meanwhile.

"I must," he said, in a subdued voice. "It is too late to draw back now, and beggars can't be choosers."

"But beggars can retain their self-respect," she retorted. "They need not associate with people whom they do not care to have anything to do with. Even when one is poor, one has a certain amount of independence left, and it seems to me that if we consent to Mr. Trench's insulting and demeaning stipulation, we shall simply be selling ourselves body and soul, and——"

"Hush, Rosa!" he interrupted, plaintively. "Pray spare me your criticisms." Then his face worked, and he added, bitterly, "Do you suppose, child, that I do not feel the indignity of our position as much as you? Can you imagine that I am not aware of all, and more than all that you would say? God only

knows how miserable I am. I would have died a hundred times over rather than see this day, but Death is a visitor who rarely appears when evoked. You are the first person in all my life who has ever reproached me with want of pride ; but," and his voice broke, "what can I do? If I refuse Mr. Trench's request I may never get so good a tenant again. He is willing to paint and paper the Castle throughout, and put it in a state of thorough repair. That will entail an expenditure of at least a thousand pounds, for, as you well know, the whole place is falling to rack and ruin. The truth is, Rosa," he concluded desperately, "at the present moment I am driven to distraction, and cannot afford to lose Mr. Trench. There! now you are acquainted with the exact state of affairs. Pleasant, aren't they?" and he tried to smile.

Rosa said nothing for a minute. She had had no idea matters were so grave, and her father's despair both shocked and frightened her. But presently a wave of compassion surged up into her heart, and a sudden moisture sprang to her bright young eyes. She stole to his side, and kissed him softly on the forehead.

“Poor papa,” she whispered. “Forgive me if I hurt your feelings, but I did not know, and—and,” with an heroic swallow, “I will try and be civil to these odious people when they come, if only for your sake.” Then her indignation once more blazed forth, and, clenching her small fist, she added with murderous emphasis, “But, oh! how I hate them. They have completely spoilt our lives.”

Of course this was very unreasonable of Rosa; she did not see things in their true light; but then youth is always impetuous.

It was unfortunate, however, that out of all the young ladies present at the meet, she should have been the one to excite Burr Trench’s admiration so powerfully as to cause him to register the vow with which our reader is already acquainted.

The agreement was signed in the spring, and three months afterwards old Mr. Trench died very suddenly, leaving Burr heir to his immense fortune. Business kept the young man in America, and it was not until the beginning of the following January that he found himself in a position to hunt. He had only arrived at Fieldborough Castle the night



before, where his English chum, Cuthbert Marshall, had been keeping house and riding his horses ever since the cub-hunting season.

“Take my advice, old man,” said Cuthbert, following the direction of Burr’s eyes. “Don’t lose your heart in that quarter. The Lady Rosa Grasslands is an aristocrat to the tips of her pretty little fingers, and nobody in these parts is good enough for her.”

He spoke a trifle spitefully, but omitted to mention that he had proposed on nothing a year, and been refused kindly but firmly. There are some men who never forgive a woman for saying no, and remaining insensible to their fascinations. He was one of them.

Burr gave a start of surprise. “What!” he exclaimed. “Is that charming girl on the chesnut horse the Earl of Fieldborough’s daughter?”

“Yes; and report says she is engaged, or as good as engaged to her cousin, the Honourable Godfrey Fitzmaurice, so you had better fix your affections on some one else more likely to respond to them.” And Cuthbert laughed carelessly

A determined look stole over Burr’s keen,

intelligent face. It was a face full of nervous energy; dark, clear cut, but not handsome in the ordinary sense of the word. The eyes, however, arrested attention. They were bright, quick, penetrating as a hawk's.

"Waal," he said, "if Lady Rosa is really engaged, I may take your advice, but if she ain't, I guess—why, I guess I'll have a try."

"You may try as much as you like," rejoined Cuthbert, shrugging his shoulders, "but I shall be very much surprised if you succeed. She's a nice girl in herself, but she comes of a deuced haughty, stuck-up lot." And so saying, he walked away, whilst Burr received an influx of visitors, and hospitably pressed them to partake of meat and drink at his expense. After a little, he went on to the lawn, and went straight up to Lord Fieldborough, who had previously been pointed out to him by his friend.

"Good morning," he said. "Will you not come in and have a whitewash? I am Burr Trench you know—your tenant."

The idea of a stranger coming up in this familiar manner, and inviting him to enter his own house was too much for Lord Field-

borough. He had suffered a good many humiliations, but this really seemed the climax. He thought, too, that Mr. Trench might have waited for an introduction, instead of addressing him so jauntily and with so much assurance.

“Damned bad taste,” he muttered, as he drew himself up in his saddle, and sat very erect and as solemn as a judge.

“Or perhaps you would prefer a glass of rye whisky,” suggested Burr. “It’s rare old stuff which I brought over from America with me.” And he glanced pleasantly up at the haughty figure towering above him.

“No, thanks,” said his lordship, stiffly and convulsively. “I’m not fond of rye whisky; or, indeed of any of your national drinks.”

“Ah!” said Burr, lamely, feeling repulsed by both the words and the way in which they were spoken. “Some other time, perhaps. I hope—that you will often come to the Castle. I don’t want you to mind me.”

“Thanks, Mr. Trench,” interposed Lord Fieldborough, cuttingly. “You are very kind, but I can’t help minding you.”

Burr reddened, but took no notice of the

remark. "I trust," he went on, "that you—you and Lady Rosa will often come and dine." Then a kind of desperate courage came to his aid, and he glanced at Rosa, who was busy talking to a handsome man with a big blonde moustache, and eyes almost as blue as her own, and added, "By-the-bye, will you be good enough to introduce me to your daughter?"

His lordship frowned, and seemed about to make some evasive reply. Then he remembered the terms of his agreement—that miserable agreement which eat into his vitals every hour, every minute of the day, and bowed formally.

"Rosa," he said, to the girl in a dull, mechanical voice. "This is Mr. Trench. He wishes to make your acquaintance."

She lifted her eyebrows superciliously, and acknowledged Burr's wish by the faintest possible inclination of the head. Whereupon he advanced, and in his eager, unceremonious manner laid one hand on her horse's mane. She immediately reined the animal back. The action was so marked, and so full of avoidance, that he must have been dense

indeed had he not noticed it. And denseness was not one of Burr Trench's weaknesses. He coloured deeply through his sunburnt skin, and an awkward pause ensued. He broke it by saying, "I have been trying to persuade your father to come in, but he declines. May I bring you out a glass of wine?"

"Thank you," she said, curtly. "I never drink wine."

"There is a good plum cake going if you fancied a slice."

She gave a little affected laugh, and audaciously mimicked his accent to his face.

"You are real funny. Plum cake at this hour of the morning! Who ever heard of such a thing. No, thanks, I have too much respect for my figure to indulge in such vagaries." And she, too, drew herself up, much as her father had done; but somehow, the effect produced was different. Any way, it did not strike terror into the young man's heart.

"When one has such a pretty figure," he said, enthusiastically "one is quite right to take care of it."

Up went her nose in the air. "May I beg

that my modesty be spared your opinions." And, with this severe snub, she urged her horse to a walk, whilst her companion observed, in an audible tone, "Confound it. That Yankee chap is a deuced cool hand. I'm glad you gave him a good setting down, Rosa. The fellow's down-right impudent."

"Yes," she laughed in return. "I flatter myself I did that pretty neatly."

"Come on, said Captain Fitzmaurice. "The hounds are moving off." She followed him obediently, and soon Burr lost sight of them in the crowd. He was considerably annoyed, but strange to say, Lady Rosa's insolence did not affect the admiration which she inspired. Curiously enough he rather liked her hauteur and reserve. It piqued him and put him on his mettle. The women of his own country were different and comparatively easy of approach. He had never been snubbed in America as by this well-born British maiden. She told him as plainly as if she had spoken, that she considered him her inferior, and did not care twopence about his money. His spirit rose. He belonged to the class of men who delight in surmounting

difficulties by the sheer force of a strong, determined will. Perhaps, too, he realised instinctively that Lady Rosa was more lovable than she chose to appear.

"I guess she don't like turning out of her old home, and woman-like visits her displeasure on me," he mused, hitting the right nail on the head, with Transatlantic quickness. "Waal; that's natural enough, and I can forgive her for being a bit stand-off; but I draw the line at Fitzmaurice. For I suppose it was he. 'That Yankee chap,' indeed! What confounded cheek, I'd give my eyes to cut him out." Thus thinking, Burr mounted his horse, and before long all angry thoughts were effectively dissipated by the pleasures of the Chase.

He knew how to ride—if not as artistically as people who had hunted the greater part of their lives, at any rate well enough not to disgrace himself in public, and what he wanted in skill he made up for in pluck. Added to this, his horses had been carefully selected during the summer by Cuthbert Marshall, and were the best that money could procure. The magnificent bay which he rode

as first horse was a regular picture, and had cost the modest sum of five hundred guineas. Many an approving eye was cast at the steed, if not at the rider, and Burr had the satisfaction of knowing that he was better mounted than most people.

A fox was soon afoot, and the hounds dashed out of covert, close at his brush. The air resounded with their merry music, and before long the fun became fast and furious. Burr was simply in ecstasies. For the first time in his life he experienced the gloriously exhilarating sensation of sweeping over the springy green turf, and flying through the air, as his good hunter took each successive fence without halt or hesitation, landing with the lightness of a deer. His blood glowed; a hot thrill ran through his veins. So intense was the excitement, that at first starting he somewhat lost his head, and went out of the way several times to jump an extra big place when a small one happened to be close at hand. For this he only got both laughed and sworn at. He had yet to learn the rules of the hunting-field. But one or two rather bad crashes, a hard rap at timber, and



the dropping of hind legs, gradually taught him caution, and little by little he began to use his eyes with judgment. Arrived at this stage, he perceived a charming feminine figure, clad in a neat dark habit, sailing along a few yards ahead, following close in the wake of the gentleman whom he rightly took to be Captain Fitzmaurice. Burr noticed how gracefully Lady Rosa sat her horse, and how lovely her red-gold hair looked beneath the brim of her pot hat. The horse did not seem to him worthy of its rider. He was a cobby, underbred animal, who showed no quality, although he certainly jumped well. Lord Fieldborough could not afford to give high prices; consequently his daughter was but indifferently mounted. In spite of this the Lady Rosa rode right gallantly, and managed to see many a good run. Meantime, hounds were forging ahead at a rare pace, and scent was evidently first-rate. The country was stiff and required a finished performer. By degrees people dropped out of the ranks, and looking back a long line of stragglers was to be seen. Up till now Burr had maintained his position admirably, and followed close in

Lady Rosa's footsteps. Suddenly the pack swung sharp round to the right, bringing an exceedingly awkward obstacle in the line of the pursuers. It consisted of a thick bullfinch with a wide ditch on the near, and a stout oxer on the off side. The knowing ones found a gap, and popped on and off. But Burr, whose blood was thoroughly up, charged the whole thing, at a gallop, with the result that he rolled head over heels into the next field. He kept firm hold of the bridle, however, and was up again just in time to see Captain Fitzmaurice and Lady Rosa look round.

"What an awful crash!" she exclaimed. "I hope nobody is hurt. Who is it that is down?"

"Only that Yankee chap," responded her companion, indifferently, "and serve him jolly well right, too. Come along. Hounds are running like the devil." And away went the pair, leaving Burr to remount in a jiffy, and thinking very little of English manners. But every dog has his day, and his was close at hand. A couple more fences safely negotiated, brought them to an ominous line of

pollard willows, and right ahead showed the treacherous gleam of water.

“Storlingbury brook for a monkey,” shouted Captain Fitzmaurice, selecting a spot where the bank looked sound, and rushing at it at full speed. His good horse cocked his small spirited ears, and responding nobly to a touch of the spur, flew it in his stride, though with scarcely an inch to spare, for the brook was wide, and the banks broken and undermined. Just then, the hounds caught sight of their fox, and, with murderous notes and bristles up, ran like mad. The Captain glanced impatiently back at his companion, who was slightly hesitating on the opposite bank. The chesnut did not like water, and Lady Rosa knew this full well.

“Come on,” called out Captain Fitzmaurice, “if you are coming.”

The colour flew to her face. His words sounded like a taunt, and seemed to cast an imputation on her courage. She and Burr charged the brook simultaneously, but with different results. His magnificent hunter landed safely and well, whilst Lady Rosa’s chesnut stopped short, then, finding himself

unable to refuse, made a half-hearted jump. There was a splash, a scream, and the next moment both rider and steed were submerged. Only a gurgle and a bubble marked their disappearance.

"Deuce take it all," murmured Captain Fitzmaurice. "Now I suppose I shall have to go in after her, and lose my place. Women have no business in the hunting-field. They are regular nuisances." Then he caught sight of Burr, who was already off his horse and preparing to dive into the stream. "Oh, all right," he said, with a sigh of relief, "it's no use two of us getting wet, and if you fish her out, I needn't." Just then Lady Rosa's face, looking very pale, appeared above the muddy water. She heard Captain Fitzmaurice's concluding words, and flushed crimson.

"Pray go on," she gasped, "I'm all right—I—I'm not a bit hurt—please don't mind me." And she allowed Burr, who by this time had plunged into the water, to put his arm round her waist, and drag her to *terra firma*.

"Sure you're none the worse?" asked the Captain, sitting safe and dry on his horse.

"Quite sure," she answered. "Please go on. If there's one thing I hate more than another, it is being regarded as a '*nuisance*.'"

And he went, leaving her to the tender mercies of Burr, who, as he upheld her slender form, said to himself, with a thrill of triumph, "Surely they are not engaged, or he never could have forsaken her like that." Whereby he displayed his ignorance of the British sportsman.

"I am afraid you are wet to the skin," he said, solicitously, to Lady Rosa.

"Yes," she answered, "I have not a dry stitch on. That rogue of a Jackanapes. He is such a steady fencer, yet detests the very sight of water."

"Will you take my handkerchief to wipe your face with?" said Burr, producing a silken one from his pocket, and unfolding it. "I have not used it at all, and it is quite clean."

"Thank you," she said, looking straight into his brown eyes, and thinking they had rather a nice expression. If he had been any one else, she should have liked him. He was so kind and considerate, and gave up his

own sport so freely for her sake ; but, of course, as things were she couldn't. She was bound to go on hating him as her natural enemy, to the end of the chapter. Nevertheless, when he was supplying her with a towel, giving her brandy, wiping her saddle clean, and performing a variety of little friendly acts, it was no longer possible to be quite so frigid. If a man is useful, you must thank him for his services, whether you object to him or not. So when Burr had helped her in every way he could think of, caught her horse, and re-placed her in the saddle, she said :

“I am very much obliged to you, Mr. Trench ; and now I suppose the best thing I can do is to go home and get into some dry clothes. Do I look an awful object ?” And she turned to him with the instinctive coquetry of a pretty woman.

Burr's face sparkled with fun. “I am sorry not to be able to reply to that question,” he responded, though his eyes did so in lieu of his tongue. “But I have much too great a respect for your modesty to hazard an opinion on the subject. I quite

admit being a boor, but I hope to prove an apt pupil, and trust in course of time to learn manners from so fair a teacher."

She bit her lip with annoyance. Oddly enough, this strange American man, who seemed such a queer mixture of courtesy and effrontery, made her feel small. One thing was quite clear. It would be wiser in the future to adopt a distantly civil policy, and avoid passages of arms. His tongue was sharper and more incisive than she had bargained for. By this time the hounds and their pursuers had entirely disappeared from vision, and she and Burr were alone. She gathered up her reins, and said a trifle unsteadily, "Good-morning, Mr. Trench. I think I shall go straight home."

"All right," he said, mounting the bay, whom a labourer had just brought back, and turning him in the same direction as Jackanapes.

"What are you doing?" she asked, in surprise. "Are you not going to re-join the hounds?"

"Certainly not," he said, emphatically. "I guess I should think real meanly of myself

if I allowed a lady in distress to ride home alone."

"Oh! but this is absurd, Mr. Trench. I have ridden home scores and scores of times, and know every yard of the way."

"That may be, but you are not going by yourself so long as I am here."

"Not if I order you to leave?" she asked, half angrily, half mischievously.

"No, not even if you order me. It is a man's duty in life to care for women."

"But supposing I *prefer* my own company—supposing I find a companion disagreeable?"

"Then," he said, raising his hat, "I have the honour to wish you good day. A lady's preference is more than I can oppose." And with these words he walked away, leaving Lady Rosa to her own devices. He did not even turn round to see how she took his departure, but went steadily on in a direction removed from Fieldborough. For the second time she experienced a sensation of being bested—she who was accustomed to rule over the young men of the county like an imperious queen. She stood and watched his



retreating form for two or three minutes. Then, when he was almost lost to sight, she clenched her teeth together with a snap, and cried aloud: "I'm delighted he has gone, and, at any rate, he knows now how intolerable his presence is to me."

Yet Lady Rosa would have been rather glad of assistance on the homeward way, for she had to pass through a series of bridle gates before reaching the road. And when she came to one of these gates by no conceivable means could she open it, so that at last she was forced to dismount and walk quite a mile in her wet habit, which hung around her limbs like a lump of lead. Finally she had to get on to a stone heap and ask a passing tramp to hold Jackanapes' head, before she could remount. Altogether, by the time she reached home, she was in a very piteous plight. A hot bath and clean linen soon put her outward woman to rights; but the inner one had received a hurt from which she found it impossible to recover. She and Godfrey had always been friends. It was tacitly understood in the family that they would become man and wife. Hitherto she

had dwelt on the prospect with a kind of placid complacency, but now her feelings had suddenly undergone a change.

"It was horrid of him leaving me in the lurch like that," she soliloquised. "It showed a nasty, egotistical nature. Surely when a complete stranger could give up his sport to pull me out, Godfrey might have done the same. And then those words—those mean, disgusting, selfish words—'If you fish her out, I needn't.' What can a man's affection be worth who speaks like that?"

Lady Rosa spent a sleepless night, and awoke languid and unrefreshed. It was a non-hunting day, and Captain Fitzmaurice strolled over in the afternoon. Lord Fieldborough happened to be out. The cousins were therefore alone. She received him with marked coolness.

"What's the matter, Rosa?" he asked after a bit, finding his efforts to draw her into conversation vain.

"Nothing," she answered, shortly.

"You ain't any the worse for yesterday, are you?"

"No, though I might have been drowned had I depended solely on your friendly services."

He coloured. "Oh! hang it all. Of course I would have jumped in in a minute had it been necessary."

"I quite understand," she rejoined coolly. "Pray don't defend your conduct. You evidently did not find it necessary to undergo personal discomfort on my account, and left the task to a stranger. No doubt, from your point of view, you were perfectly right."

"Do you want to quarrel, Rosa?" he enquired, gnawing gloomily at his moustache.

"Really, Godfrey, it is a matter of perfect indifference to me whether we do or not."

His eyes blazed. He confronted her sternly. "What do you mean by those words?"

His displeasure did not intimidate her, as he intended. On the contrary, it roused her spirit. She rose from her seat, and faced him.

"I mean, Godfrey," she said, speaking in a weighty, deliberate tone, "that I wish to break off our engagement. My eyes are opened. I don't blame you. Very likely you can't help your temperament, but I quite

see, after yesterday, that a woman would be no better than a fool to trust her life's happiness into the keeping of a man like yourself."

"Have you gone out of your senses, Rosa? Because you happened to fall into a brook and somebody else pulled you out, why such an absurd fuss? The thing is too ridiculous." And he tried to take hold of her hand.

She snatched it away. "The thing may or may not be ridiculous, Godfrey, but a girl before matrimony has only one friend—her power of observation. If it prove to her that she has made a wise choice, well and good. Unfortunately mine takes an opposite tendency. A man who is selfish and brutal before marriage, will be doubly so afterwards. If he cannot give up anything for a woman when he is engaged to her, the chances are that she will degenerate into his slave when she becomes his wife. I like you, Godfrey. You are pleasant to look at, specious and plausible, but," and she tossed her head back, while her upper lip curved with disdain, "in spite of your lineage, you are not one of Nature's noblemen."

"If you were a man I would shoot you," he said, quivering with passion.

"Very likely," she rejoined, wondering how it was she had been blind so long to his imperfections. "But being only a woman, perhaps you would prefer to strike me." So saying, she went close up to him, and folded her arms with taunting defiance.

He changed his tone. "Rosa," he said, "I do love you—I swear to God that I love you."

She looked at him narrowly, and sighed. "Yes," she said, after a pause, "I believe that you do. You love me as much as you are capable of loving any human being apart from yourself. I grant that. But such love does not satisfy me. I want more—a great deal more. I could never live with a man once I had found out that he would fail me in times of need. There! Now I have had my say. Let us part friends." And she held out her hand.

He ignored it. "My belief is," he said, savagely, "that you are chucking me for this American chap, and are after his money."

The blood rushed in a crimson wave to her face.

“How dare you say such a thing!” she said. “Oh! how dare you—how dare you! I wonder, Godfréy, that you are not ashamed of yourself.”

He hung his head and muttered, “Well, you know, he’s awfully rich and I am poor, and no doubt it would be a good thing for uncle to have a wealthy son-in-law, who could help him out of his difficulties.”

“Thank you, Captain Fitzmaurice,” she said. “If I had any doubts as to the wisdom of my conduct, that speech has effectually dispelled them. It shows how little you understand my character, if you believe I would sell myself for gold. No,” and her clear voice rang through the room like a bell, “when I marry I shall marry the man of my heart, and that is why I am parting from you.”

He had nothing to say, and realised the impossibility of going back on the past. He was a little afraid of his cousin in her present mood, and gladly effected an escape, comforting himself with the reflection, that “if she expected so much from a fellow, he was well out of it.” So their paths, which

once had been near together, divided ; and the *Morning Post* announced, in due course, that the marriage arranged between Captain the Honourable Godfrey Fitzmaurice and the Lady Rosa Grasslands would not take place.

Burr Trench hunted assiduously all the winter, and, by his boundless hospitality and good nature, soon made his way in the county. Lady Rosa remained silent when his name was mentioned. She gave up abusing him, and it is to be presumed that her hatred had changed from an active to a passive state. They occasionally rode back together from hunting and during these *tête-à-têtes* she found opportunities of studying his character. She watched him narrowly, with the closeness and suspicion of a woman who refuses to believe the evidence of her own eyes, and whose prejudices are hard to overcome. No one knew the struggles which she had with herself in secret ; how she endeavoured to force back the new and mysterious feeling which was springing up by degrees in her girlish heart, and causing its pulsations to beat with an hitherto unknown strength.

“No,” she said to herself over and over again. “I detest him. It cannot be. I am fanciful, nervous, and want change of air.”

She packed up her things and went away for a week, going to theatres and balls every night. To her surprise, absence did not effect a cure. On the contrary, she was no sooner gone than she longed to be back again. Imperious Fate urged her on. The tide of passion whirled her along, much as a mountain torrent whirls a shrivelled leaf. She was powerless—conquered.

Yes, conquered. In the Spring, when all Nature was pulsing with life, when the tender young leaves were uncurling themselves in the sunshine, and the young sap, the growing grass, and increasing verdure filled the air with freshness and fragrance, she admitted the fact, and desisted from inward strife. It was out of keeping with the sun and the blue sky and the merrily-tweeting birds. And then, when Burr looked into her eyes, he saw a new soft light in them, which gave him courage to speak.

The last day's hunting had come. The



primroses were in bloom, the lambs were frolicking in the fields. They rode home side by side—silent but happy. At last he spoke. “Rosa,” he said, “I think you know how things are with me. You hated me in the beginning, that I felt keenly enough; whereas I loved you from the first moment that you came riding up the drive on Jackanapes. I vowed then to win you if I could. Put me out of suspense. Tell me truly and honestly if I have succeeded in overcoming your dislike.”

Her face was all rosy, her eyes humid and downcast.

“Burr,” she said, softly, “you know that you have. I am ashamed when I think of my behaviour.”

He kissed her sweet red lips, in spite of a little opposition on the part of Jackanapes.

“Ah!” he cried, triumphantly, “‘that Yankee chap’ has carried his point after all. Are you sure you care for him, darling?”

“Yes,” she said, “quite sure. Here’s Hip—hip, hurrah, for the Stars and Stripes!”

## IN A NORWEGIAN VALLEY.

KRISTIAN ANDERSEN was only a poor fisherman. All his days he had lived in a remote Norwegian valley, hemmed in by towering mountains, on which, summer and winter, the snow never melted. He built himself a little wooden hut, and thatched it with the bark of the birch tree, which he covered with moss. Then he proceeded to roll away the big stones that surrounded his cottage on every side, and with great toil and trouble finally succeeded in clearing a diminutive plot of ground. Here he sowed a few handfuls of wheat and some potatoes.

Though narrow, the valley was very beautiful, and a fine river ran down it from the mountains to the Fjord. In the autumn the salmon lay so thick in the pools that one could count them as one walked along the banks. Every peasant proprietor and small farmer living close at hand had from time immemorial possessed the right of netting the

river, and many a fine fat fish Kristian caught in this manner. When he took one of any size he salted it for the winter, and so, by hook and by crook, he and his wife and five flaxen-haired little ones managed to subsist. But it was often a hard struggle, for they were very poor, and the beauty of the children was spoilt by the starved, almost wolfish expression of their thin, pinched faces. They carried themselves straightly and sturdily, like true mountaineers, but their bodies were lean and ill-nourished. Kristian himself was a tall, finely-made man, but his frame wanted filling out, and he bore a curious resemblance to a hungry greyhound. Often half-starved, always thinly clothed, and exposed to the heat of the summer sun and the cold blasts of the chill wintry weather, these seven persons lived. The mother washed, cooked, fetched water from the river in a heavy bucket, toiled in the fields, bore numerous children, and at thirty looked already an old woman. The little ones played about the cottage door, clad in picturesque tatters, whilst their fair, rough heads became bleached white by the sun. And Kristian gained a livelihood by

cutting down trees, by building boats, selling firewood, and occasionally making boots. He was a kind of universal genius, who, in a rough and ready way, could turn his hand to anything. So the days passed, without any of the luxuries and superfluities which in England not only render life enjoyable but are there considered almost indispensable to existence. With Kristian and his wife the object was to exist—to keep body and soul together. The simple couple asked for nothing more. They had been brought up in poverty, and if not content, at all events were accustomed to hardship. Then, too, they had fresh air and space, neighbours who were no better off than themselves, and their own beautiful valley to look at whenever they felt inclined. Yes, people might fare worse.

After some years there came a talk of a rich Englishman taking the river on a long lease. Upon this, all the different proprietors met together, and consulted at length. Finally, it was agreed that they would sell their rights of netting and trapping for the sum of three thousand kroner, or about a hundred and sixty pounds of our English money. The

rent was a good one, and the owners of the river considered they had done a rare stroke of business when, without further bargaining, the Englishman complied with their demands. Only Kristian regretted the transaction, for he had been a very successful fisherman, and knew how to fish with a rod after the foreign fashion. But to compensate him for the salmon which he could now no longer catch, he was appointed gaffer at the fixed sum of two kroners, or two shillings and threepence a day. And with two shillings and threepence coming in regularly for two, or perhaps three months, Kristian thought himself a rich man. So he, too, was satisfied with the bargain, and felt prepared to welcome the stranger. Kristian fully deserved the post of gaffer, for it was generally admitted that no one knew the river so well as he, or could manage a boat with such dexterity; moreover, his cottage overlooked the "Fos" or Waterfall pool, where the finest sport was usually obtained. For the salmon could not leap the foaming heights of the "Fos," consequently they accumulated in vast numbers beneath the deep backwaters formed by the tem-

pestuous current as it came rumbling down over a jutting ledge of huge grey boulders. The spray rose high in the air, moistening the silvery stems and fluttering foliage of the birch trees growing near; and in summer, when the sun shone, a brilliant rainbow spanned the feathery mass of falling water, and irradiated it with gay prismatic colours. It was a lovely spot, and Kristian loved it well.

From his boyhood upward he had watched the vain efforts of the shining salmon to overleap the "Fos." The sound of its dull, thunderous roar was as sweet music in his ears. He knew every stone, every eddy in the river by heart, and the sight of the snow-clad hills, standing out clear and sharp against the quiet evening sky, turning from grey to purple, from purple to black, filled his soul with indescribable serenity, and affected his simple nature more than the finest church service. At the time of which we are speaking he was thirty-five years of age, and he had never once travelled beyond his native valley. He could conceive of other spots, but of none so fair, so peaceful, and so homelike.

The winter snows had melted, the earth was clothed in green, the birches were shaking out their pretty round leaves, and the silver-scaled fish were rushing up from the Fjord every day. In the first week of June Sir Patrick Ryan arrived from England, with an English servant, and a vast amount of luggage. From the moment they went out fishing together, Kristian entertained for his new employer an intense and genuine admiration. Judging from the Norwegian's point of view, Sir Patrick had indeed much to recommend him. He cast a splendid line, was a thorough sportsman, wore good clothes, and last, but by no means least, was the undoubted possessor of "*mange penge*" (much money).

And while Sir Patrick fished from the bank, and Kristian sat crouched behind him—a motionless figure who might have been cut out of stone, save for a pair of hawk-like grey eyes, which, shining above his fair, curly beard, were gravely fixed on the water—a great many strange, new thoughts disturbed the honest fellow's simple brain. He pondered over problems which hitherto had not pre-

sented themselves to his consideration, and asked himself why he should have to work hard from five in the morning till twelve at night, when the Englishman spent all his time on amusement. He, too, would have liked to have done the same—to fish the river with a fine new rod, and have a man at his back to carry all his things, and help him in every emergency. Sir Patrick had a good waterproof coat to put on whenever it rained, whilst he, Kristian, in his ragged red shirt, got wet to the skin. *He* sat and shivered, whilst the other was warm and dry. *He* never had more than two meals a day, and often felt quite faint from hunger, whilst this fortunate foreigner could eat as much as ever he chose. Why were these things allowed by God? Why did such cruel inequalities exist between man and man? Were they not all of the same flesh and blood? Kristian felt sorely puzzled.

When he gazed at Sir Patrick's well-nourished frame, at his muscular limbs and broad shoulders, and contrasted them with his own, he could not smother a certain sense of injury. They were about of the same



height and shape, but how different were their lots! The one man had so much, the other so little. Sir Patrick lived for pleasure, and he for toil, and yet he felt deeply that he could have appreciated the pleasure very keenly had it fallen to his share. He was a toiler from necessity, not choice. He would have liked to see his children fat and round, and to put them in the way of making money. Money! Ah! that was it. Money counted for everything in this world. Without it one was very little better than a beast of burden. But here in Norway there was no chance of getting rich. It was such a poor land. Generation after generation lived on the same wretched plot of ground, and son followed father to the grave.

Thus Kristian mused discontentedly enough, for, after all, what had he to content him?

But by-and-by he grew ashamed of his envious thoughts, for as he came to know the Englishman better, he learnt to love him with a very real and true affection. In process of time he regarded Sir Patrick as a superior being not to be compared with himself. He

knew so much, and had so many accomplishments. But what won Kristian's heart more than anything was the Baronet's unvarying kindness. Poor fellow! he was not used to gentle treatment. When Sir Patrick stuffed his pockets full of sweets, and distributed their contents to the little ones, or else presented him with a stick of tobacco to chew, it touched him to the quick. He could scarcely express his thanks for emotion. A close friendship sprang up between the handsome young Englishman, born with a golden spoon in his mouth, and the simple peasant, to whose share so few of the good things of this life had fallen.

When sport was bad, as frequently proved the case in the fine summer weather, Sir Patrick in his broken Norwegian would tell Kristian of England, and what a flourishing country it was, how the horses were quite big, and very fast, and the fields stretched for miles, bounded by hedges, and how comparatively there were but few rivers and mountains. Kristian listened open-mouthed to such wonders as these. His employer's talk seemed to open out a new world to the

honest, ignorant fellow, who, nevertheless, was not devoid of intelligence.

It was a very bright, hot season. There came a period of protracted drought, during which the salmon refused to take. Day after day Sir Patrick flogged the various pools without any result. His fly floated beautifully down on the clear, green water, but not a fish would look at it. Kristian tried all sorts of places, and made so many excuses for his beloved river, that at last he was at his wits' end to invent any more. At length, in despair, he bethought him of a small pool very seldom fished, on account of the difficulty in reaching it. It could only be approached by shooting some dangerous rapids. Kristian was said to be the single fisherman in the whole place who knew how to guide a boat safely over them, and he had learnt the secret from his father when still a mere boy.

Confined between two high banks, the stream at this point rushed down for about a couple of hundred yards with fearful rapidity. Just at the narrowest part, it curled over into three or four great waves, which broke up

into a seething whirlpool. The natives regarded it with awe and superstition, for tradition said that two human lives had been destroyed by its treacherous powers of suction. Beyond this whirlpool lay a seemingly quiet backwater, on either side of which the stream, dividing, flowed swiftly on. Just when the boat began to get rocked by the big waves, it was necessary to pull for sheer life in order to avoid the eddy in the midst of which stood a sunken rock, and gain the backwater. When the river was low, the rapids were even more difficult to shoot than in seasons of flood, for the danger of striking against some sharp stone was greatly enhanced. Knowing this, for a long time past Kristian had not attempted to fish the pool. But one night, when things had been going even worse than usual, Sir Patrick suddenly said :

“ Kristian, it is ages since we went to the Svora Hul. What do you say to our trying it this evening? There is always an off chance of hooking a good fish in that backwater.”

Kristian shook his head.

"I am afraid the river is too low," he said.  
"The boat cannot go safely."

Sir Patrick shrugged his shoulders carelessly.

"Oh! never mind, we'll chance it. Where there's a will there's a way "

Although he doubted the wisdom of his master's decision, Kristian made no further remonstrance, so they got into the boat, and he tied the oars on firmly with two bits of old rope. The boat was a regular cockle shell. Her planks were not half an inch thick, and she leaked so badly that every ten minutes she required baling out with an old tin pot used for the purpose. When the two big men were seated, her gunwales were not half a foot above the water, and she looked an uncommonly frail craft in which to brave the rushing torrent. Immediately they pushed off from the shore the current caught her broadside on and whirled her along at railroad speed. Banks, boulders, trees, seemed to fly past them. Dozens of white-crested wavelets splashed angrily beneath the boat's bow and, jumping up, half filled her with water. Kristian sat motionless, a hand

on either oar, his keen eye fixed steadily on the rushing stream. When Sir Patrick made some laughing observation, he vouchsafed but a monosyllabic reply. His faculties were absorbed, and he neither could nor would allow them to be diverted. Occasionally he dipped an oar, and slightly altered the boat's course.

On, on they raced, until it seemed as if nothing could stop them in their mad career. The excitement was intense. Sir Patrick laughed out loud. He was five-and-twenty, had an adventurous nature, which delighted in a touch of danger, and nerves that had never been subjected to any very great ordeal and were consequently thoroughly sound and healthy.

All at once, the boat began to toss violently, and seemed on the point of capsizing. She was nearing the eddy, and the first of the big waves had caught her. Two or three times she bumped against the bottom, for although the pool itself was deep, the water here was shallow. Suddenly Kristian set to work to row, as if for his life. One moment his back was bent double, the next he leant

far back, with strained muscles, and straight extended legs. His face grew red with exertion, and the veins on his forehead became swollen and purple. A dozen vigorous strokes up stream altered the boat's course, at the instant when the eddy threatened to sweep her round and round, and saved her from her perilous position. She gained the backwater, and floated quietly on its smooth surface, whilst the foaming current glided swiftly by on either side. The edges of the stream were much patronized by salmon, and the Svora Hul—as it was called—was notorious for very big fish.

“Bravo!” cried Sir Patrick, as Kristian, leaning forward, mopped his moist brow with the sleeve of his faded red shirt. “I knew we could do it, if we tried. Here, take a pull.” And he handed him his flask.

They now settled down steadily to fishing, and neither of them spoke a word. Again and again the baronet cast his Jock Scott in the most artistic manner, and with admirable patience. But the wily fish were not to be tempted from their haunts. Once he fancied he saw the nose of one within a few inches of

the fly; for ten minutes he flogged perseveringly over the spot, but the cunning salmon would not come again even for a shy inspection. Sir Patrick began to give up hope, especially as there were only a few casts left. The sun had sunk to rest by now, and twilight was rapidly stealing over the narrow valley. The rounded outlines of the great bald hills stood out black against a clear daffodil sky. The head of the pool reflected the last rosy flush of sunset, but its tail was in complete shadow. The sombre reflection of an enormous mountain rendered it dark as night, and the surface of the water resembled a polished agate. Sir Patrick's fly, falling lightly, scarcely made a ripple on the smooth, gliding stream. Suddenly, by the fast fading light, he saw a huge boil. The next moment his line tautened, the tip of his rod was bent downwards, and whirr-whirr went the welcome click of a rapidly vanishing reel.

"Stor Lax" (big salmon), sang out Kristian, in tones of unqualified delight.

And indeed he seemed right, for the fish when he felt himself hooked, made such a



tremendous rush down stream, that they were forced to leave the pool and pursue him as fast as they could. When at length he checked, he gave a sullen dive, and sulked at the bottom of the river, hanging all the time like a lump of lead on Sir Patrick's arms. In order better to play his captive, that gentleman jumped on shore directly the opportunity presented itself, and Kristian followed his example. For ten, twenty, thirty minutes the fish remained immovable. It was getting monotonous, and Kristian tried to liven him up by throwing stones at him. Meanwhile, Sir Patrick kept a steady strain upon the salmon. His arms and back ached to such an extent that he felt convinced the victim was of no ordinary dimensions. At last the fish once more began to show signs of life; he jerked repeatedly at the line, first with a fluttering, uncertain motion, then angrily and heavily.

This was an anxious time for Sir Patrick, who feared every moment that his captive would free himself of the obnoxious hook. Luckily it held firm, and the salmon, finding his tactics of no avail, headed steadily up

stream ; but the current was too strong for him to succeed in regaining the backwater, where he had spent such a pleasant, lazy summer ; half choked, he turned tail, and went off again down stream at a great rate. Sir Patrick ran along the stony bank in pursuit ; his reel was well nigh exhausted, and spinning fast. That was a race ! For nearly half a mile the fish always had the best of it, and the angler and his trusty attendant panted for breath. The excitement was so intense, that it almost degenerated into pain. Kristian and Sir Patrick experienced an immense relief, when at length the prize pulled up in a wide pool, and took to sulking again. But his forces were beginning to fail him, though he had recourse to other means of resistance. Backwards and forwards he rushed in a state of fierce irritation and fear ; but each rush waxed feebler than its predecessor. At this juncture, Kristian, gaff in hand, entered knee-deep into the water, and crouching, watched his opportunity. Nevertheless, it did not come just yet. The salmon continued to struggle desperately, and until now, had never once

shown himself. Little by little, however, as he became exhausted, he was drawn nearer to the surface of the water, until at last he lay revealed in all his shining length.

“By Jove!” exclaimed Sir Patrick, his face flushing red with elation. “He’s a big ’un, and no mistake; take care, Kristian, take care. I would not lose him for a hundred golden sovereigns.”

Kristian’s eagerness to secure the prize was so great, that he had advanced waist-high into the current, which threatened to sweep him off his legs. He was keen as mustard, and did not mind a wetting in such a cause; besides, he had nothing to spoil. At length he got a chance, though not a good one; but he was an expert gaffer, and with a thrust, quick as lightning, of his lean right arm, he impaled the monster fish. Out spurted the red blood, and a mighty splashing ensued, but the salmon’s days were numbered, and with some difficulty he was towed into shore. Straightway he was fallen upon by Kristian, who, seizing a big stone, belaboured him about the head until all the life was knocked out of him. He had evidently been up the

river some time, and was long and black to look at ; nevertheless, master and man gazed at him with pride and admiration. The fly was firmly imbedded in the gristly jaw of the fish, and in order to extricate it a knife had to be employed. Then Sir Patrick produced his weighing machine from his pocket. Thirty-six pounds and a quarter was the record. No wonder the angler felt satisfied with his evening's amusement. By this time it was too dark to fish any more, so Sir Patrick mounted into a comfortable carriol, which quickly conveyed him to his quarters, whilst Kristian, wet to the skin, and feeling the cold begin to pierce to his bones, trudged back to his wooden hut, there to find an insufficient meal provided, and go hungry but happy to bed.

When the next evening came, Sir Patrick was very keen to try the Svora Hul again. The sun had shone brightly and warmly during the day, whilst a strong north wind blew from the Fjord to the valley. In consequence, the river had fallen considerably since the previous afternoon. Kristian looked dubious when Sir Patrick proposed that they

should endeavour to repeat their luck in the same pool.

“ Very little water,” he said. “ Not good for boat to go. Better fish somewhere else.”

“ What !” exclaimed Sir Patrick jestingly “ I thought you were made of better stuff. Surely, you are not afraid ?”

Kristian flushed a dull red beneath his sun-burnt skin. He felt the taunt severely.

“ No,” he said shortly, “ I am not afraid, I am ready to go if you wish it.”

“ All right. By-the-by, Kristian, can you swim ?”

“ No ; I do not know how.”

“ Then I must save you and myself too, in case of an emergency.” Sir Patrick spoke the words lightly, and without a thought.

Whereupon they seated themselves in the boat, and before long were tearing down the rapids, literally flying over the sunken boulders scattered along the river’s bed. All at once the boat’s keel struck sharply against a hidden stone, and nearly sent Kristian and Sir Patrick overboard. The former plied the oars with right good-will, for the current was

spinning the stern of their cockle-shell round and round, and as she had sprung a leak, the situation was anything but pleasant. As bad luck would have it, the right oar suddenly snapped like a twig beneath his grasp, the broken blade floating away before he could recover it. Kristian's exertions had set the boat free, and in less time than it takes to tell she was borne towards the eddy. He rowed desperately with his one remaining oar, using it as a paddle, but the stream was too strong and he could not make head against it. On, on they went at sickening speed. Even Sir Patrick appreciated the danger, and his fair, florid face turned a shade paler than usual. The big waves caught them—they were powerless to cross at the proper angle—and swept the boat right into the eddy. Crash! She struck the great rock in its midst, and collapsed like a nut-shell beneath a pair of crackers. Her occupants were precipitated into the water. Sir Patrick felt himself being sucked down—down—down. He struck out wildly, and as he did so his fingers came in contact with some falling body, round which they closed instinctively. Chance had flung

him against Kristian, who, he recollected, could not swim. He clutched firmly hold of the Norwegian, and then swam for dear life. But the eddy's horrible powers of suction prevented him from making any way. He became faint and exhausted. A kind of vertigo was descending upon his senses. He realized that if he gave in to it it meant death, and continued to struggle fiercely. Then he became partially unconscious, but all the time he had a vague, uneasy sensation of being whirled along like a straw, bumped, tossed and bruised.

When he came to himself he was lying in shallow water, with his head resting on a stone, his hand still grasping Kristian by his shirt. Slowly and painfully he regained the shore, dragging his companion after him.

Kristian's appearance frightened him. His eyes were closed, his mouth open, his face of a whitey-purple hue, whilst from the right temple issued a few great drops of blood. A deep cut disfigured it, probably inflicted by some pointed rock with which he must have come in contact. Sir Patrick knelt down on the ground in alarm.

“Kristian, my brave fellow,” he said tremulously. “Oh, Kristian, speak to me!”

But no answer came to the appeal, and he went on in accents of bitter self-reproach:

“It was my folly which led us into this danger. I would not take your warning, and now if anything happens to you, I—I”—and his voice broke—“shall never forgive myself.”

Alas! Kristian heard not. He lay rigid and motionless; his fair, hollow face turned up to the summer sky, and his finger-nails buried in the palms of his hard, brown hands. Overcome by a horrible apprehension, Sir Patrick searched hurriedly in his pocket. Yes, thank goodness, his flask was there. He poured its contents down Kristian’s throat. The strong English brandy produced a temporary effect. Kristian sighed; the lids of his grey eyes unclosed. The eyes themselves were no longer bright; they wore a dull, glazed look. A flickering colour stole to his cheek.

“Kristian,” pleaded Sir Patrick with increased agitation, “for God’s sake speak to me!”



Kristian seemed to hear and recognize the well-known voice. A faint smile passed over his fleshless face. He sought to hold out his hand. Sir Patrick seized it, and held it in a warm pressure.

"That is much better," he cried cheerily. "Is there anything I can do for you?"

"My wife—my children," murmured the dying man, speaking with difficulty. "Take—care—of—them."

"Yes, yes, of course. But what nonsense you're talking, Kristian. You'll be able to look after them yourself, as usual."

Kristian turned his head uneasily.

"No. It—is—all—over—with me. Do—not—grieve." For the tears were standing in Sir Patrick's eyes. "I—I—am going—to—an—e-easier world—to live in, th-than—this."

"Oh! Kristian, I am so miserable. It is not true that you are dying. I can't—I won't believe it." And Sir Patrick wrung his hands in despair. "Confound my cursed folly! Would to heaven I had taken your advice!"

"Do not bl-blame yourself. I—am—glad

—to—go. I have of-often been very hungry and ve-very tired. Were it not for my wife and—little ones”—his breath was failing him rapidly—“ th-there—is—nothing—in—this—world—to make me—wish—to—stay.”

A wonderful smile illumined his countenance; for an instant a bright light lit up his sunken eyes. Then, with a fluttering sigh, he turned his head gently round, and spoke no more . . . Sir Patrick's grief was intense. Remorse added to its poignancy. Death seemed to him a terrible and an awful thing. He could not think how any man could face it resignedly. The earth was so bright, so fair! He was too young, too wealthy and fortunate to realize that the conditions of life vary, and that from his birth to his end they had proved too hard for poor Kristian. The honest fisherman had passed from toil to rest—from labour to peace. What was there to regret? To quote his dying words, he had often been very tired and very hungry! The great All-Father had had compassion, and called his simple soul to a dwelling-place where hunger and fatigue are unknown.

### “THE YOUNG 'UN.”

“SPARTAN first, Gloriana second, The Boaster third.”

I sat and gazed at the telegram in blank despair, for practically it meant ruin. I knew that only too well, and cursed my own folly for having idiotically taken to the turf as a means of increasing the small patrimony which I originally possessed. Now it was almost entirely dissipated and gone to swell the bookmakers' profits. I gnashed my teeth with rage.

My father—dear, foolish man—had seen fit to put me into an expensive cavalry regiment. Being an only son, I looked forward to inheriting a considerable fortune at some future date; but when he died about two years ago, it turned out that he had been living for some time past on his capital, and moreover had lost nearly all his substance in speculation. Only sufficient remained to secure me a

small annual income of from three to four hundred pounds. I don't wish to defend myself. With that sum and my pay, I ought to have been able to subsist in comfort if not affluence. But I possessed a perfect passion for horseflesh, and this taste, carried to excess, led me to gamble on the turf. It proved my undoing. Had I rested content with hunting, I might have retained my fortune and position and stuck to a profession of which I was naturally fond. Like a veritable young fool, however, I imagined myself to be a very knowing card where racehorses were concerned, and in my conceit and ignorance actually believed that it would be possible for an outsider to beat the "bookies" at their own game. At first I had the good, or rather bad, luck to win a tidy sum. I backed Tinker for the Derby at the remunerative odds of ten to one, and landed a nice little stake of eight hundred pounds. But I lost it all at Ascot, and so much more into the bargain that my affairs ended by becoming seriously involved. At Manchester, Doncaster, and Newmarket, that fickle goddess, Fortune, steadily refused to show me her face. At the latter place I

ran across an old friend, who gave me a straight tip about The Boaster.

“Back him all you can, my dear fellow,” was his advice. “The horse never was better in his life. He’s doing a splendid preparation—gallops his three miles every day, and pulls up as sound as a bell. Old Jupiter leads him, so there can’t be much mistake about the form, and if he don’t win the Cesarewitch, I don’t know what will. Anyhow, he’ll take a deal of beating.”

Thus encouraged, I plunged desperately on The Boaster, hoping by one bold *coup* to regain all my previous losses. I stood to lose four or to make twenty thousand pounds. If the thing came off, I was comparatively a rich man. I refused to contemplate what would happen or in what position I should find myself, if it didn’t. Regimental duties prevented my attending the Newmarket October meeting, and to tell the truth I was glad of an excuse to remain away. My whole nervous system was in a state of tension, and I felt like a speculator on the Stock Exchange, who turns every morning with eager haste to the Money Market column in the newspapers,

and yet dreads to read the intelligence he may find there. But now, after weeks of suspense, my hopes, fears, doubts and misgivings were at an end. There—on the pink paper of the telegram were legibly written the fateful words, Spartan first, Gloriana second, The Boaster third.

As I gazed vacantly at them, feeling stunned by the blow, a cold perspiration gathered on my brow, and although the weather was singularly mild for the time of year, I shivered as if it were winter.

"Broke," I muttered in tones of dull despair. "Stone broke. What the Devil am I to do?" And I buried my face in my hands. When crushing and overwhelming disaster seizes one, it is a natural instinct at first, to sit still and do nothing. The mind is unhinged. It no longer works in its accustomed groove, and recoils in' dismay from the new conditions. But inactivity is a luxury which ruined people can scarcely afford to indulge in. I was soon forced to face the situation. Settling day came round with alarming rapidity, and I had to make arrangements for immediately paying over the four thousand

pounds. When this heart-breaking task was concluded, I found my capital reduced to the modest sum of sixteen hundred pounds. The look-out was anything but encouraging, and after a prolonged mental struggle, I reluctantly determined to send in my papers, and sell out of the Army. This decision was chiefly arrived at through the advice of my greatest "pal," Bobbie Thornleigh, also a subaltern in the regiment. Bob was a capital fellow, full of go and dash, and his parents having died during his minority, he was exceedingly well off and owned a handsome property in the south of England.

"Tell you what, old man," he said, when we talked the matter over, "if I were you, I would set up in the horse-dealing line. Any number of gentlemen go in for 'coping' now-a-days, and they assure me that it pays thundering well."

"Wants a lot of capital," I objected.

"Pooh!" returned my companion, who had a happy, confident nature. "You've got enough to start with, and if the worst comes to the worst, I'm quite prepared to put a little into the concern. I may as well lay my

money out at interest in that way as in any other."

I wrung his hand hard. He withdrew it hastily, saying :

"Don't be a fool, Chesterton."

"You're a good friend, Bob," I said, undeterred by the reprimand. "There never was a better."

"Nonsense, old chappie. But to return to our subject. Horse-dealing ain't half a bad trade as times go, and I can't think of any other that would suit you as well. You've nerves of iron—the first essential—fine hands and an elegant seat. All that is so much stock-in-trade to start with, and taken in conjunction with your fascinating manners and the partiality of the fair sex, sooner or later you are bound to land on your legs." And he clapped me cheerfully on the back.

Bobby was so delightfully sanguine that after a while the project began to recommend itself. Sixteen hundred pounds was too small a sum to support existence upon, and accordingly I resolved to try a new venture, hoping it would prove more lucrative than



the last. Therefore, with many regrets, and feeling very down in the mouth, I bade farewell to my companions of the — Hussars. I tried to put a hopeful interpretation on matters and not break down, but I was sensible enough to realize that the step I proposed taking would alter my social status considerably. And at six-and-twenty, if a man has any ambition in him and is worthy of the name, he does not relish the prospect of descending instead of ascending the ladder. The proceeding is decidedly humiliating, and apt to render him cynical and bitter. It takes a good deal of philosophy to accept the buffets of fate with serene indifference, and I confess that I had not arrived at such heroic stoicism. Call it false pride, vanity, what you like, I felt my reduced circumstances acutely, and would have cut off my right hand to recall the past. When I stepped into the cab, which was to convey me from the barracks to the railway station, my spirits were at a very low ebb. At the last moment Bobbie thrust his head in at the window. He had been kindness itself all day, but we had spoken little. Parting was a wrench to us both.

"Look here, old man," he said, in eager, stuttering tones, "I—I've got an i—i—idea."

"Indeed!" I exclaimed, with a melancholy attempt at playfulness, "cherish it, in case it should never have a successor."

"Shut up! What I was thinking was this. You know that I've taken rooms at Foxington, and propose going there to hunt on the 1st of January and spending my long leave. It's a ripping centre for sport. The rooms are standing idle at the present moment. Why shouldn't you occupy them and make a start? When I come, we can club together, and perhaps by that time you will be able to confer an everlasting benefit upon me, by selling me a decent quad. or two. You know I never can get hunters off my own bat. I'm invariably done."

He spoke in an off-hand manner, and did his best to conceal the delicacy and generosity of his offer. It touched me to the quick. So deeply indeed did I feel his goodness, that I could do nothing but wring his hand in silence. My throat suffered from a tightness and constriction which rendered speech impossible.

We parted on the understanding that we should meet again.

A month later, I took up my abode at Foxington, a town, which, as everyone knows, is celebrated in the annals of the Shires. I intended to invest the half of my small capital in horseflesh, keeping the remaining moiety as a reserve fund in case of sickness or disaster.

Previous to my arrival, I had picked up a couple of gees at Tattersall's. They were good-looking animals of the right stamp, being well-bred and up to fourteen stone. I set my face against buying weedy, undersized nags, knowing from experience how great was the difficulty of disposing of them. When one buys, intending to realize a profit, one can't be too careful in one's selection. However, I was satisfied with my purchases, and flattered myself in both instances that I had made a good bargain. The bay was six off, the brown mare five years old. They stood on good sound legs, short from the knee downwards, and had every appearance of hunters. I proposed to keep my eyes open when I went out hunting, and to buy two or three more as the opportunity

presented itself. By riding my small stud hard, and going well to the front, I hoped to attract notice, and by degrees form a connection, even although I was forced to begin business in a small way.

On the 30th of October—how well I remember the day—I made my first appearance with the Foxington Flyers. It was the last week of the cub-hunting season, and orders were given by the master that hounds should be allowed to go away with the first fox they came across. This cheering intelligence set us all on the alert, and I for one was keen as mustard. I had ridden the bay out to covert. It was the first time I had been on his back, but by his springy gait and willing spirit I knew instinctively that he was a good 'un. In five minutes we were on terms of amity, and having ascertained that his paces were all that could be wished, nothing remained but to try him over a country.

The morning was glorious; brisk and sharp, with a clear sun which illuminated the moist herbage with a myriad iridescent sparkles, and lit up the various dun and

russet lines of the fading leaves. The fresh air, the wide green landscape and brilliant sunshine, had an exhilarating effect both on man and brute. The love of life, accompanied by an innate sense of physical vitality, ran strong in one's veins, and set dull Care at defiance. She threw off her black garb for the time, and felt that it was good to be young and vigorous; good to have health, and nerve, and strength, and that these things compensated in great measure for loss of fortune. No one could be accounted unhappy whilst they remained.

I arrived somewhat late at the meet, and consequently had no opportunity of taking stock of the assembled company, since hounds were on the point of moving off as I trotted up. We jogged to a nice, snug little covert about three miles distant, which lay embedded in a sea of green. Whilst yet some way from our destination a loud view holloa rent the air. A fox was endeavouring to escape before his canine foes came to close quarters, but a fragrant whiff happened to be borne to their nostrils and merrily giving tongue, off they dashed in pursuit. In an

incredibly short space of time they settled to the line, and every one began to gallop as if for his life. And well was it they did, for the sluggards were soon left behind. A nice flying fence, with the ditch on the far side, quickly required consideration. The bay cocked his little spirited ears, and went at it with pleasing determination. He took off well, and landed lightly and safely in the opposite field. I was delighted.

"Bravo, old man," I murmured, stooping forward and passing my hand down his fine black mane. "You'll do."

Just then I felt a rush of air, and saw a girl on a dun horse gallop by. I could not see her face, but judging from the back view, I was certain it must be pretty. A coil of thick yellow plaits peeped out from beneath the brim of her pot hat. They nestled neatly on a white nape, which showed above a spotless linen collar. Her slight figure was elegant and fairy-like in the extreme, and it inspired me with a strong desire to obtain a glimpse of its owner's countenance. She sat her horse firmly and squarely, with elbows well in to her side, and with hands conse-

quently in their right place. I noticed this particularly, for to my mind nothing looks worse than to see a woman's arms working up and down like a pump handle. If they only knew the absurd effect it has, and how it affects their horsemanship, surely they would sit still. The girl ahead of me sat perfectly quiet. There were no wriggles, no convulsive movements of the body, and perhaps that was why I admired her seat so much.

The hounds were travelling at a tremendous pace, but the dun was a deceptive animal, and gave one the impression of going quite leisurely. It was only when I endeavoured to race past him that I discovered how fast he got over the ground. Try what I would, my bay could not get his nose in front, and for several successive fences that little bit of a girl led the way. Before long a huge stile obstructed our advance. I have seldom seen a stiffer or more uncompromising piece of timber. It appeared to be brand new, and was composed of the stoutest ash. In height it could not have been far off five feet. It was set in the midst of an unjumpable bull-

finch, which ran like a solid black wall on either side. By no possibility could one either jump over or creep through its thorny twigs. Bad as the stile was, it seemed the only means of egress. Two or three of the foremost men took a look at it, and then turned away. The huntsman, however, rode boldly to the rails. The ground dipped just in front of them, so that the take off was indifferent. His good roan mare hit the top bar hard, and landed all abroad, narrowly escaping a fall. Whilst I stood hesitating whether to follow his example or listen to the voice of prudence which just then spoke up rather forcibly within my breast, the girl with the yellow hair suddenly shot out from the ranks of the small crowd that was gradually collecting in the rear.

"Come up, old man," I heard a clear, musical voice call out; and then, with a shudder of horror, succeeded by a thrill of admiration, I saw that stout dun horse go leisurely up to the obstacle, get close under it, spring from his hind legs, twist his quarters in a manner which must have been peculiarly hard to sit, and clear the whole thing with



at least half a foot to spare. It was a fine performance, and fairly put me on my mettle. To be beaten by a girl. 'Pshaw! If I broke my neck I must have a shot at that stile, else my manhood would be shamed. I set my jaw, and gave the bay a touch of the spur, to which he responded generously. But he had the faults of youth, and being a bit too eager, took off wildly, in consequence of which he caught the top bar with his toes, and pitched right on to his head. The shock unseated me and sent me flying forwards. For a moment I made sure we were down, but by some extraordinary piece of luck he did not roll, and after a desperate struggle, managed to regain his feet.

"That was touch and go," I murmured. "But a miss is as good as a mile, and we are over, even if not quite as neatly as might be wished."

I looked round to see if anyone would come after me, but my narrow escape evidently had a deterring effect, for my late companions were scuttling away to the left as fast as they could. I now directed my attention ahead, and perceived that the only

persons actually with hounds were the huntsman and the lady on the good dun horse. Five minutes later the beauties took a sudden turn, which placed those who had not jumped the stile completely at fault. We three were *alone!* "Hurrah! Hurrah! Forrard on, Yoick on to him, Merry Lass, Leu leu, Prudence!" cried the huntsman, cheering on his favourites. His eye was riveted on their gleaming quarters. He became more and more excited every moment, and for myself, I freely confess that I felt almost intoxicated with delight. Nevertheless, the sight of that indomitable girl in front infused just one bitter drop in my cup of pleasure. Few men like being beaten by a woman, and up till now she had bested me every yard of the way. Although my bay was by no means slow, the dun could go two strides to his one. I gave up all attempts at passing him. They were useless, and only had the effect of distressing my mount without producing the slightest result. No command is so hard to keep out hunting as the tenth. I broke it again and again. Somehow, one's neighbour's horse always

seems better than one's own, and encourages the sin of covetousness. On the present occasion I could not refrain from envy, especially as I felt the bay's heart beginning to thump, and knew that, owing to shortness of condition, his bolt would soon be shot, unless a timely check occurred to let him regain his wind.

By gad! how that girl did ride. Foxington is famed for the size of its fences, but she and the dun skipped over them as if they were absolutely nothing. He certainly was a marvellous animal, and never made a mistake. Yet he was nothing particular to look at, being short and cobby, with a thick neck, coarse mane, and so low in front that when he threw up his head, it almost touched the rider's face. But he had loins and a back to carry a house, was deep through the girth and singularly well ribbed up. Whenever he came to an extra stiff fence, he swung his quarters round in the same fashion as he did at the stile, and landed with his hind hoofs right in the track of his fore. How the girl sat him was a mystery, but although he dislodged her slightly once or twice, as a

rule she retained her seat splendidly. In short, I did not know whether to envy or admire her most. I fear that, on the whole, the former sentiment predominated. It certainly did before the end of the run, and when my young horse began to labour in his stride and hang out unmistakable signals of distress. I was just debating the wisdom of pulling him up or struggling on another quarter of a mile or so in hope of a stoppage, when, as bad luck would have it, we came to a brook. It was an infernal big brook moreover, with banks steep enough to give a beaten animal the shivers. Of course the dun flew it in his stride. He got over with quite a foot and a half to spare, and once more his example inflamed my valour at the expense of my discretion. I endeavoured to follow in his wake, but alas! did not fare so well. The bay was pretty well cooked, and although he made a gallant bid, he jumped short. The bank on the far side gave way beneath his hind heels, and in we both tumbled backwards. The water struck cold and disagreeable as it soused into eyes and ears and nose. I was on my legs in a

minute, and struggled to *terra firma* in a dripping and shivering condition, whilst as I emerged from the mud, a loud who-whoop greeted me. The bay was frightened out of his life, and proved most difficult to catch. He floundered down the stream, splashing and striking out wildly with all fours, whilst I strolled along the bank, every now and then making vain snatches at his bridle.

“ You had better leave him alone. There is a ford within fifty yards, and then he’ll be able to clamber out quite easily,” said the same musical voice I had heard before. The speaker had a slight Irish brogue, which gave peculiar charm to her words.

I looked hastily round, and confronted the girl with the yellow hair. Her face did not belie her figure, as is so often the case. I realized this with a feeling of gratified relief. When you have lavished your admiration on a feminine back-view, few things are more disappointing than to find the front one totally different from the ideals which you have formed. The girl’s face was oval, and delicate both in colouring and contour. Just now her complexion wore the bloom of an

apple-blossom, and in her deep violet eyes there still lingered the glow and flash of excitement. Her mouth was red like a rosebud. It was one of those mouths which look as if they were made to be kissed.

"Thank you," I said, in answer to her admonition. "It was a most confounded nuisance getting into that brook."

"Comfort yourself by reflecting that you are in at the death," she responded, with a smile; pointing to the huntsman's figure outlined against the green fields and far blue sky. "Johnson is only now performing the obsequies."

"What a clipping hunter that is of yours," I remarked enviously, whilst the thought flashed through my brain, that if only I could buy him at a reasonable price, he would be the very animal for Bobbie Thornleigh. For Bob, though the best little fellow that ever stepped, was not much of a rider, and required a most perfect conveyance to carry him across country.

"Yes, isn't he?" responded the girl, patting the dun's muscular shoulder with her little, gloved hand. "Although I say it who

shouldn't. The Young 'Un is bad to beat, and there are not many horses in this county who can show him their heels."

I gazed at him critically, and with the eye of an intending purchaser. As previously stated, he was plain and cobby in appearance, and only when one examined him narrowly, did one become aware of his good points. But no real judge of horseflesh could have failed to admire his tremendous girth, strong, roach back and marvellous loins. They showed at a glance where his jumping power came from. His legs betrayed undeniable signs of work. There was a blemish on the off fore which looked as if it might have been caused by wire, and the joints were round; whilst the near fore was greatly enlarged the whole way down from the knee to the pastern. The fetlock was twice its natural size, and felt hard and callous to the touch. Still, I had seen the horse go, and knew him for a nailer. The girl had called him The Young 'Un, too. Having youth in his favour, I thought it quite possible that, with careful stable management, the enlargement might be reduced. Anyhow, he took my fancy un-

commonly. I could still see him popping over the stile and flying the brook.

"I suppose," I said, with simulated indifference, "that the horse is not for sale by any chance?"

My companion's red lips parted in a smile, and when she smiled she was simply charming.

"I am not at all keen about selling him," she said, after a moment's reflection. "The Young 'Un is the best horse I ever rode in my life, still" — and the violet eyes grew intensely bright and luminous, as if their owner were secretly amused — "I might let him go at a price."

I pricked up my ears at this. I had expected a flat refusal, and congratulated myself on having to deal with such a business-like little person.

"I can't afford to give long prices," I said diplomatically, "and fear that yours will probably be too high for me."

"Do you call a hundred and fifty too high a price?" she inquired.

Honestly, I could not say that I did. The dun was a strongly made, compact animal,



up to a lot of weight, and there could be no doubt as to his performances. I had had every opportunity of witnessing them, and had seldom seen a finer fencer or better galloper. In spite of his fore legs, I considered him cheap at the money, and inwardly wondered that his rider put so moderate a sum upon him.

“If you really mean what you say,” I said, “I’ll send you a cheque for the amount to-morrow morning.”

“Very well,” she responded. “The Young ‘Un shall be transferred to your stables the day after to-morrow. It will be better to let him rest until then. Will you tell me where to send him?”

I wrote down my name and address on a piece of paper, and handed it to her.

“The horse is sound, I suppose?” I inquired casually. “There is no need to have him vetted?”

“You have seen him going,” she answered. “If you are not satisfied with his performances, by all means seek advice.”

“No, I’ll take your word for it.”

“Is it safe to take a lady’s word for

anything, Mr. Chesterton? Are you not just a trifle rash?"

I shook my head smilingly, being proud of my knowledge of horseflesh and confident of my own judgment.

"I think not," I rejoined. "And now, will you tell me to whom I shall write out the cheque?"

"Most certainly. To my father, whose name is O'Flynn—Patrick O'Flynn—and mine is Norah."

"A delightful name!" I exclaimed gallantly. "One which suits the fair owner to perfection."

"Hadn't you better catch your horse, instead of standing still trying to pay clumsy compliments?" said Miss Norah satirically, though I could have sworn that the little puss was by no means displeased by my *clumsiness*, though she sought to appear so.

Her advice however was sound. The bay had now reached the ford and was within easy reach. I caught his bridle with the crook of my hunting crop, and he quickly regained the shore. The poor horse looked a sorry object. For the matter of that, so also must I; for

my immersion had been complete. I was cold, and my teeth chattered in my head, whilst the water dripped from my hat down my neck.

“Will you not go in?” said Miss O’Flynn courteously. “We are close home,” pointing to an old red-brick homestead about half-a-mile away. “My father will be glad to give you a change of clothes, I am sure.”

“Thanks,” I said, shivering. “I think my best plan is to ride straight back to Foxington.”

“You know your way? Bear to the right, through those bridle gates,” indicating some in the distance. “Then take the first turn to the left, and it will bring you out on the main road to Foxington.”

“How far is Foxington from here?”

“Not more than seven miles. You might be in a worse predicament.” And she laughed.

“Most decidedly. Good morning, Miss O’Flynn,” raising my hat. “I’ll send the cheque for a hundred and fifty this evening.”

“Right,” said the little maiden promptly. “From this moment The Young ’Un is

yours." Then she rested her hand on the good beast's mane and murmured, "Poor old boy! I shall be awfully sorry to part with you. It's hateful to think that you've carried me to hounds for the last time." And a tear rolled down her smooth cheek, and fell with a great splash on the dun's firm crest.

I liked her for that tear. My first impulse was to beg her to consider the bargain annulled, if she regretted it in the least. But on second thoughts I came to the conclusion that it was a mistake to let sentiment obtrude in the buying and selling of horseflesh. Lifting my hat, I trotted away at a brisk pace, thinking to myself what a sweetly pretty, tender-hearted and captivating young lady Miss O'Flynn was. In fact, I thought of her violet eyes all the way home. They had inflicted a great deal more damage upon me than my cold bath. There was a mischievous sparkle and radiance about them, which I found curiously attractive. And then, how she rode! One may say what one likes, but a truly gallant woman inspires respect. Courage in a frail, feminine creature is a magnificent attribute, and Norah possessed it

in the highest degree. The sight of those strong dun quarters, carrying that slight, girlish figure so bravely to the front, was photographed as by a camera on my brain. All that evening, as I smoked my solitary pipe in my solitary sitting-room, I could think of nothing but Norah O'Flynn. Once or twice I pulled myself up with a "Hold hard, old boy It won't do for you to go falling in love. That would be a most terrible complication, and increase your difficulties a thousand fold," but the little witch's image held its place and refused to be dislodged.

The following day I went hunting, which served as a distraction, especially as Miss O'Flynn was not out. On the morning after, the dun came over as arranged, and I at once went round to the stables to have a look at him.

"He stands uncommon shaky on that near fore leg," said my groom, in tones of disparaging displeasure. "He can't set it down firmly, nohow."

I was forced to admit that the man did not exaggerate. When seen in the stable, the

horse appeared to much less advantage than in the hunting-field. He now stood with his leg stretched straight out from the shoulder, as if he really could not bear to rest his weight upon it. I felt it from the knee downwards. The sinew was full, and the fetlock joint was burning hot and swollen up to an enormous size.

"H'm!" I said, with inward misgiving. "That's bad. Have him out, and let me see how he trots up and down the yard. Hold hard," I cried presently, when the man had performed my bidding. "That's enough. The horse is not sound. Run round the corner, Simson, and see if Taleman is at home. If he is, say I shall be greatly obliged if he could step this way. After all," I growled to myself, "I was a fool not to have the animal vetted."

Taleman was a distinguished veterinary surgeon who lived close by. At my words, Simson led The Young 'Un back to his box, and disappeared, leaving me to wish I had not acted in quite such a hurry and could get my hundred and fifty pounds back again.

In a few moments Simson returned, accom-

panied by Mr. Taleman, who bore the reputation of being a singularly honest practitioner.

"I want you to be good enough to vet. a hunter for me," I said, pointing to the box where The Young 'Un was located.

Directly Taleman saw the horse he burst out laughing. "God bless my soul, Sir," he exclaimed. "If you take my advice you'll keep your money in your pocket. It's throwing it away to have that poor old fellow vetted."

"What on earth do you mean?" I asked with a sudden sinking of the heart.

"The horse is notoriously unsound, Mr. Chesterton, and would never pass any veterinary examination, so I may as well tell you the truth to your face."

"You know him then?" I exclaimed in surprise.

"Know him, sir, I should rather think I did. There's scarcely a hunting man in this county who doesn't, seeing that he has been out with the hounds for the last eighteen years."

"Eighteen years! You must be joking. Why he was sold to me as a 'young 'un.'"

"Ha, ha!" cried Taleman, laughing till the

tears ran down his eyes. "That beats everything I ever heard of. Look at his mouth, Mr. Chesterton."

Like a young fool I had neglected to do so, hitherto. Norah O'Flynn had so frequently alluded to her steed as The Young 'Un in my hearing, that I had taken it for granted he did not exceed the age of five or six. But now as I peered into the dun's mouth, and perceived two rows of long, yellow teeth, from which the gums receded and from which every trace of black had vanished, I could not suppress a groan.

"Yes," I said slowly. "He's an old horse—a very, very old horse, I fear. There can be no doubt as to that."

"I know his age to a day," said Taleman, briskly, "for a friend of mine bred him about five miles from here, and hunted him until three years ago, when, thinking he had broken down, he gave him in a present to Miss O'Flynn. The horse will be two-and-twenty on the 14th of next June, and a better, gamer animal never looked through a bridle. Even now he is a marvel and carries Miss O'Flynn like a bird. But, Lord! to think of



selling him for a hundred and fifty." And once more Taleman burst into a peal of laughter.

For my part, I could see no joke in the matter, and his laughter only irritated me.

"It strikes me I've been done," I said gloomily, kicking away the straw at my feet.

Taleman looked at me with a certain commiseration visible in his countenance.

"You're not the first, Mr. Chesterton, by any manner of means whom Miss Norah and her father have bested, if that's any consolation to your feelings. It takes an uncommon sharp fellow to get the better of old Patrick O'Flynn and that pretty little daughter of his."

"Who and what are they?"

"O'Flynn is a broken-down gentleman of good family, who lost all his fortune on the turf. He took to horse dealing, and people say he has made a sight of money. Miss Norah is his only daughter, and is worth her weight in gold to the old man, for as sure as ever she rides a horse with hounds, some young buck like yourself takes a fancy to him. How the little witch manages to sell such a

number, Heaven only knows, but she does somehow. All the young men are wild about her, and she's had several good offers to my certain knowledge."

"Deuce take the girl," I exclaimed angrily. "I am a poor man, and here I find myself saddled with a horse twenty-two years old, whom nobody will buy off my hands, and who may crack up at any moment."

Taleman became serious. "Take my advice, sir," he said. "Pass The Young 'Un on. Ha, ha! to think of her christening him by that name when he has been called Vanguard all his life. Wasn't it cute? However, as I was saying, you must pass the horse on, for three times already I have patched up that near fore leg. How he jumps with it at all is a mystery, only he has the heart of a lion. You perceive that he is short and cobby, low in front and possessed of enormous power behind the saddle. The consequence of this special conformation is, when he lands over a fence, he is apt to strike his fore legs with his hind. Thrice in the course of the last ten years, he has cut almost clean through the sinew and I have had to sew up the place. The result is a

permanent weakness and enlargement of the joint, and if it happens again—as it may do at any moment, in spite of the most careful riding—there is nothing left for the poor old fellow,” patting the dun’s strong neck, “but a bullet.”

“Does Miss O’Flynn know all this?” I asked excitedly.

“Undoubtedly. I told her so myself, only a short time ago, and warned her always to have the horse well in hand over his fences.”

“Then I shall proceed against her, I’ll be hanged if I won’t.”

“Softly, Mr. Chesterton, softly. Let us look at the facts. I am afraid that if you did not buy the animal subject to veterinary examination, your chance of success is small. And remember that going to law is a very expensive proceeding. At all events don’t act in a hurry. And now I must be off, sir, for I’ve another engagement.” So saying, he touched his hat, and walked away from the yard, leaving me to chew the cud of some very bitter and disagreeable reflections. I was boiling over with indignation and scarcely knew how to contain myself. Reason told

me to write an incisive letter to the lady, but impulse declared for a personal interview, and impulse carried the day, as it generally does when we are in a passion. Miss Norah O'Flynn should hear a piece of my mind at any rate, and I shut my ears resolutely to the sweet grave voice, which said: "Are you not just a trifle rash?" If I were rash, she was crafty and calculating and unscrupulous, and deserved righteous punishment, which I intended to deal out with the tongue, if in no other way. So I walked to Cubberton, and my long, swinging strides made nothing of the seven miles.

"Is Miss O'Flynn at home?" I inquired loftily, when I had arrived at my destination.

"Yes, sir," answered a neat, rosy-cheeked maid-servant. "Please to step inside." And she threw open a door on the right.

As I entered the room, a tiny, fairy-like figure rose to meet me. It was the delinquent herself, looking abominably pretty in a neat, tight-fitting homespun. She smiled enchantingly when she saw me, and extended her right hand. I was so hot with indignation that I refused to take it. Miss O'Flynn

coloured. There was no mistaking the discourtesy of the action.

"I have called," I said, with irrepressible heat, "because I wish to say a few words respecting the horse you sold to me."

"Indeed!" she exclaimed innocently. "Which horse? We have so many that really I forget."

"You do nothing of the sort," I interrupted. "Don't be a hypocrite."

Her face flushed pink.

"Ah!" she said. "I remember. It was the dun, of course. Pardon my stupidity."

"There is not much to pardon in that respect, Miss O'Flynn. But, not to beat about the bush, I propose to return him."

She looked at me. Her eyes were wonderful in their blueness and depth, but I would not let myself admire them. That would have been fatal, and by way of defending myself, I murmured no sentiment.

"I repeat that I propose to return him," I said again, a trifle disconcerted by her silence.

She folded her little white hands and sat down.

"I fear," she said calmly, "that that will

scarcely be possible. I told my father that the horse was sold, and a fresh one came in to-day. Our stable is quite full, and will not hold any more."

"That has nothing to do with me. I gave you a hundred and fifty pounds for an animal who is not worth thirty "

Her straight dark eyebrows met above the bridge of her white nose in a frown.

"Is that my fault or yours, Mr. Chesterton ?"

"Yours, most decidedly. The whole thing is a regular 'do' !"

"Pray keep your temper, and refrain from insult. Answer me this question. Did I offer you The Young 'Un for sale, or did you, of your own free will, inquire of me whether he were for sale? Now," and she fixed a severe glance upon me, "be honest."

"Th—that's all very fine," I stammered, impressed by the tranquillity and superiority of her manner. "But you deceived me. You called him The Young 'Un, and led me to believe the horse was only five or six years old, when you must have known he was getting on for twenty-two."

“Excuse me, I led you to believe nothing. You chose to jump at conclusions, without taking the pains to verify them. There are always two sides to every question, Mr. Chesterton, and that is mine. You did not like seeing me in front, and so you coveted my horse. Now, is it not so?”

“But even then—” I objected, beginning to feel uncommonly small before this judicial little personage.

“As for calling him The Young 'Un,” she went on, “that is the name the horse has gone by ever since he came into my possession. If you had a four-year-old, and chose to call him Methusaleh, what would be the harm?” And the violet eyes challenged mine boldly.

“The horse is not even sound,” I said irritably, feeling it was a farce the clever, little minx trying to turn the tables on me.

“Did I say he was?” she rejoined, with exasperating coolness. “Few animals are at that time of life.”

“It’s a confounded fraud,” I said doggedly, “and you know that as well as I do.”

The blood rushed angrily to her cheeks,

and showed red beneath its transparent skin. She did not speak for a moment. When she did there was a ring of passion in her voice, which told me that the shot had struck home.

"You have no right to say such a thing," she said impetuously. "It is ungentlemanly in the last degree."

"And when a lady commits such *unlady*-like actions, by what code of honour does she consider herself entitled to respect? To a certain extent her sex protects her from being knocked down, but it does *not* protect her from occasionally hearing the truth."

"Silence, sir. You have said enough, and more than enough. The facts are these. You saw the horse and were taken with his performances. You asked if I would sell him, and I said 'Yes—at a price.' If you had known anything about horseflesh you would never have bought an animal with such fore legs."

I winced.

"But," she went on, with severe candour, "you were keen and excited. Moreover," and she gave a little, malicious laugh, "you



did not like being beaten by a woman. I could see that. As for me, I freely confess I was tempted by the price."

Once more she had bested me. Not only had she saddled me with an old horse and robbed me of a hundred and fifty pounds, but she had contrived to put me in the wrong and make herself out an injured innocent. Angry as I was, I could not help admiring her talent. One thing was clear. It was useless to argue the matter further. Her tongue would always gain the victory over my slower masculine one. I felt that it was undignified to go on bandying words with a woman, especially when that woman had the knack of turning my most sarcastic speeches to her own advantage, and of making them seem childish and puerile. I bowed loftily.

"Good morning, Miss O'Flynn," I said. "You are too clever for me, and have managed to turn the tables, no doubt entirely to your own satisfaction. But for all that, I would rather be in my shoes than yours."

She stuck her arms akimbo in a theatrical attitude.

"Wouldn't it be a relief to your feelings to

knock me down, rather than say nasty, spiteful withering things? Oh pray throw your chivalry aside, and forget that I am a woman. Do you think I would not prefer being struck in a manly, open way, to being abused and insulted? Hit me, Mr. Chesterton. Give me a taste of your fists, and then when you have pommelled me black and blue, and your wrath has found a safety-valve, for goodness' sake, let's be friends. I hate quarrelling."

There was a quiver of real distress in her voice. Moreover she looked so bewitchingly pretty as she stood there, her hands resting on her hips, her head thrown back, an expression of outraged maidenhood on her face, that in spite of myself I felt my anger evaporating. Oh, beauty, how great is thy power! Delilah was stronger than Samson, inasmuch as she conquered him. What is brute strength in comparison with that insidious fascination which makes our veins thrill, which softens our purpose and bends our will, until, looking back on our actions, we seem as puppets incapable of self-government and control?

"I think you must admit," I said, "that you owe me some compensation."

"Compensation!" she exclaimed, with a light, triumphant laugh. "As much as you like. When will you claim it?"

Our eyes met, and little by little the violet orbs drooped beneath the steady, significant gaze of mine. A wild tumult arose in my heart. I shuddered, like one arrested on the brink of a precipice by a lightning flash.

"Good-bye," I said. "I will let my account stand over for the present, but sooner or later I give warning that I shall lay claim to the damages to which I consider I am entitled." So saying, I turned to go. My hand was on the handle of the door. A pleading voice detained me.

"Mr. Chesterton," said Norah, "you think me horrid. Sometimes," with a sigh, "I think myself horrid. But before you judge me, please remember that in this world, we *all* have to live. Occasionally we do so at the expense of our neighbours. The struggle for existence is so great now-a-days that one has to be very sharp not to go to the wall. I am sorry for what I have done.

H—here is your cheque." And she fumbled in her pocket, and held out the paper for my acceptance.

Reader, you may think me a fool, but my whole mental attitude underwent a thorough revolution. I thrust back the cheque, refusing to take it. "No," I said. "It is yours, yours by the right of your cleverness and wit, and by my folly and envy Miss O'Flynn, you have taught me a lesson. I thank you for doing so, but more especially I thank you for enabling me to retain my belief in female purity and honour."

She crimsoned with pleasure. "Mr. Chesterton," she said, "you will be kind to the poor old horse, won't you?"

I took her hand in mine, and pressed it.

"Yes," I said, "I promise to be kind to him." Then, bewildered by a host of complex emotions, I effected an escape. I was alarmed, palpitating, anxious. What did this mean? These sensations were new and—very disturbing.

Once more, when I smoked my evening pipe, my thoughts were busy with Miss Norah O'Flynn. Sternly I silenced the more seductive

ones. I told myself she was a charming, but wicked little creature, to be labelled dangerous in the highest degree to bachelor peace of mind. I even resolved in future to steer clear of the siren, for fear of falling victim to her fascinations. At the same time, with the strange contradictoriness of human nature, it occurred to me what an admirable help-mate a girl with so much ability, quickness and resource, would make to a poor man. How she would help him on, and back him up. Many of my sex prefer stupid women. They think they are more satisfactory and comfortable to deal with. For my part, I like the smart ones with brains, who are partners in the right sense of the word, and who stimulate the intellectual, instead of merely the material portion of our being.

We are curiously fashioned, and after my visit I underwent a recoil. For a month, if not more, I treated Miss O'Flynn with great reserve, and kept her at arm's length. I fancy she imagined that henceforth we were to be excellent friends, and was piqued by my conduct. However that may be, she made a variety of little advances, not palpable nor

obtrusive, but nevertheless unmistakable, which I repulsed from motives of sheer self-defence. I took care not to be rude. When I spoke to her I was invariably polite, but there are ways and means of letting a girl know that you wish to keep her at a distance. After a time Norah took the hint, and she, too, became reserved in her manner. Now and again, more especially on the days when I rode the dun, I caught her looking at me a trifle wistfully. Then she immediately drooped her eyes, and I turned mine quickly in another direction. My head told me that I was acting with great prudence and circumspection, but somehow or other my heart gave me trouble. It did not seem to agree with reason as well as might have been desired. Time glided by, and we were at the end of December. In another week I expected to be joined by Bobbie Thornleigh. Meanwhile, I had sold both the bay and the brown at a handsome profit, had bought several fresh horses, and was doing pretty well. I heard, indirectly, that Mr. O'Flynn felt annoyed at my having set up as a horse dealer so close to him, and complained of several of his cus-

tomers having deserted him. The truth was, O'Flynn was getting old and no longer rode hard, and people naturally like to see animals ridden straight to hounds before purchasing them.

Avoid Miss Norah as I might, whenever we had a good run Fate invariably threw us together. She was certain to be in the foremost division, and over and over again I trembled for her safety. Until now the Young 'Un had kept tolerably upright, although at every fence I feared he would break down. He was a grand old horse. Even at twenty-two he was the best hunter I had ever ridden in my life, and I am not likely to own so good a one again in a hurry ; but the end was only a question of time. Each run safely got through was so much snatched out of the fire, as it were. I could not honestly offer him for sale, and therefore decided to ride him to the last, and then put a bullet through his fine old head.

Well, it was the 27th of December—how clearly I remember the day ! There was a screaming scent, hounds ran like fury over as big a country as Foxington can show, which

is saying a good deal. Oxers and grief were plentiful. Norah was mounted on a young grey mare, and rode with her usual judgment and "pluck." But once or twice I saw the animal stop short, try to refuse, then change its mind and jump. Needless to say, it jumped short. Towards the end of the run, when all the horses were getting pumped, we came to a snorting big fence. There was a guard rail on the near side and a wide ditch on the off. Norah and I went at it almost side by side, though I had a little the preference. The Young 'Un launched himself like the grand hunter that he was, and got over handsomely. But, alas! alas! poor old fellow, the instant he landed his doubtful leg gave way, and over he rolled in a heap. At this moment, I heard a crash, a cry—saw a flash of something grey, was aware of a violent blow upon the head, and then unconsciousness supervened. . . .

When I came to my senses, I saw the white, scared face of Norah O'Flynn bending anxiously over me. Tears stood in her lovely eyes, and her habit was one mass of mud. Close by, a labouring man held



the grey mare by the bridle, and a little further on, peacefully browsing at the grass, hobbled the Young 'Un on three legs. Hounds, huntsmen and pursuers had completely disappeared from vision. At first, I saw everything through a mist, but by degrees that one sweet face, with its yellow hair and great tearful eyes, stood out clearly defined against the background of green pasture and blue sky.

"Thank God!" she exclaimed, in an agitated voice. "I thought that I had killed you. Oh! Mr. Chesterton, are you much hurt?"

"No, not much," I said reassuringly, though I felt curiously faint and my head throbbed as if a thousand sledge-hammers were beating at once. "Wh—what has happened?"

"I thought it was all right," said Norah. "The Young 'Un seemed to jump most beautifully. The place was a very big one, and my mare failed to clear it. She crashed through and turned over. To my horror, I saw you were down, and we all four rolled together on the ground. Oh!" with a shudder, "it was dreadful—dreadful. If

anything had happened to you I should never have forgiven myself."

I put out my hand. There was only the labouring man by, and somehow I did not seem to mind him. Norah's self-control gave way as our fingers came in contact. All of a sudden the tears overflowed their boundaries, and she sobbed aloud.

"Oh!" she cried, "it is all my fault. I have behaved abominably in selling you The Young 'Un. Taleman warned me what would happen. Oh, dear! oh, dear! I know that you are hurt, though you say you are not just to spare me, and, w—what shall I do?" crying bitterly, "what—shall—I—do-o-oo?"

Poor little girl! I was glad I had not told her that my right leg was broken. I looked into her pretty wet eyes and smiled.

"Hush," I said, "don't cry. There is nothing to cry about, and we most of us do things which we regret. You are no exception to the rule. But all that is over and done with. Norah, you made me a promise, my dear," and I held her hand tight, "the time has come when I claim its fulfilment."

She trembled. I could feel her little fingers

quivering as they lay in mine. She tried to withdraw them, but I would not let them go.

"The fulfilment of that promise," she murmured. "How can I fulfil it?"

"By becoming my wife, my love, my darling. Do you think that you could?"

She looked at me shyly. Then the tears ceased flowing, a beautiful light stole into the violet eyes, the small oval face grew bright.

"Do you think that you could, Norah?" I repeated urgently. "Do not keep me in suspense. I have tried to steel myself against you, but without success."

"Yes," she murmured under her breath, "I am—sure—that—I could                      That is to say," she added, after a long pause, "if you can forgive me."

"I have done so long ago. In my heart I forgave you from the day I threatened to send back our poor old friend yonder," pointing to the dun.

The Young 'Un did *not* have a bullet put through his brain after all. My wife declares that nothing would induce her to part with him. In summer he has the run of a nice grass field, and in winter the

poor old horse is kept warm and snug in a roomy horse-box. I think he is happy in his old age. Norah and I both hope so, for we feel that we owe all our own happiness, our mutual trust, love and content, to him. And these things are better than money, even although my father-in-law has taken me into partnership, and we are getting to have enough of that. Bobbie Thornleigh was right in his prediction. I landed on my legs, and, as Norah declares that she has done so also, there is nothing more to be said.

Yes, there is. On our wedding day, the foolish darling insisted on giving me back that cheque for £150, which had never been cashed. We bought a nice young horse with it, and turned it into £300.

## HER FIRST SALMON.

SPORTSMEN nowadays have to go far afield in order to pursue their favourite amusements. The highlands of Scotland have long since been overcrowded. Ireland and Wales share a similar fate, and as population increases, year by year it beomes more and more evident that fresh pleasure-grounds must be sought. Even Iceland and Canada are not considered too remote by ardent anglers ; but, perhaps, the most frequented country of any is Norway.

Some ten or fifteen years ago it was comparatively a little - visited land. Now, thanks to the improved communication, it threatens to become over-run by tourists out for their annual holiday ; whilst almost without exception, every river of any size or importance is in the hands of Englishmen. Those who came first were lucky enough to secure them at moderate rentals and on long leases. The Norwegian farmer looks down

with contempt on the precarious pastime of fly-fishing, and when he wants a salmon, prefers to resort to his trap—a series of wooden piles, box-like in shape, driven into the river bed, and with an ingress wide at one end, narrow at the other, which effectually prevents the fish from regaining his liberty, once he has floated up against the stream. But now all this is changed, and in the present day enormous prices are asked and given.

A short while ago a river in the south of Norway let for no less than nine hundred pounds! By this it may be seen that we have not been long in teaching the simple native how to open his mouth. Yet for those who love sport in the real sense of the word, and who if they cannot afford to pay for the very best are content to take what they can get, there still remain many places, more especially in the distant and less known fjords, where excellent fun may be obtained.

Let me try and conjure up a scene familiar to every Norwegian fisherman.

Picture to yourself then a narrow valley hemmed in by towering mountains some

three or four thousand feet high. On them the white snow rests summer and winter, enwrapping their lofty peaks with an icy mantle. Bare, precipitous cliffs, down whose scarred and weather-beaten sides foam countless milky water-falls, that fill the air with a sound of rushing waters. Little wooden houses scattered here and there, painted red, white and yellow, and looking infinitely small as they nestle at the base of the leviathan hills. Miniature fields of rye, wheat and barley, about a quarter of an acre in extent. Enormous boulders lying about in every direction, some so newly fallen that they have left a white scar on the barren bluffs over-head. Grass, emerald green in hue, wild flowers in profusion, harebells, buttercups, heartsease, marsh mallow. Birch trees with their rounded leaves trembling in the morning breeze and their silver bark peeling to the sun. The glass-like fjord that reflects every object with the fidelity of a mirror and reproduces clouds, mountains, snow, with marvellous lucidity. And lastly, but by no means least, the wondrously transparent blue-green river rushing from stream

to rapid, and from rapid to deep, slumbrous pool, until it loses itself gradually in the advancing tideway. All these things are the background and accompaniments to your sport.

And now, making still further calls upon your imagination, we ask you with your mind's eye to perceive the chequered sky overhead, darkened here and there with grey clouds that yet leave the outlines of the mountains clear, and to feel that gentle breeze, exactly from the right quarter, which makes our hopes run high. Deliberately and tenderly we pore over our fly-book, and finally select that king of flies, a "Jock Scott," or as our Norwegian gillie pronounces it, a "Yock Scott." It is one of our own making, and like the chemist and bootmaker at home, we are convinced of its superiority, and that it is an article highly to be recommended. The rod is put up, the reel adjusted, the casting line well moistened and tested.

At last, everything is in readiness and we start up the valley. If it were any but a fishing morning, we should employ our time in writing panegyrics of the route, but our



zeal is too great to dwell upon scenery when there may be a "Stor Lax" (big salmon) in prospect. In course of time we arrive at a beautiful-looking pool and are told by our attendant to commence the business of the day.

This we gladly do, after first glancing upwards and downwards. To the right, the river comes foaming along over some large boulders that check its impetuous course and cause it to break into a thousand little white-crested waves. Then it expands and widens, till the rippling water, growing quieter and quieter, subsides into a beautiful lazy swirl, which, forming one smooth dark sheet, rolls with swift, graceful, gliding motion over a ledge of jutting rocks some three feet high, and then dashes into snow-white spray as it rushes past every kind of stony obstruction. Near the bank is a deep and sluggish back-water. Even a tyro cannot fail to see that this is a spot where salmon are bound to congregate.

We begin casting at a point where the current runs fast and gradually work our way down stream. Ten minutes elapse, full of

eager expectancy. Alas! no result. We fish carefully, patiently, even artistically. We cannot help being conscious of our own merits as an angler, but, great as they undoubtedly are, our powers of persuasion are evidently not sufficient.

Then—merciful Heavens! At the very end of a cast, when we have given up hope and are just wondering whether we can throw a few yards of extra line, there comes a tug. Oh! ever welcome tug.

Up goes the point of our rod in a jiffy. For all we know, it may be a forty-pounder. The reel runs out with a click, but not as far as we could wish to see it, neither is there that pleasant sensation of a dead weight on the arms which betokens the capture of a big fish.

Still, whatever he may be, he is a lively fellow and keeps dashing about for fully five minutes before we gain a glimpse of him. But already he is getting feebler and his resistance grows less. We wind up steadily, and lo! right out of the water there jumps a splendid sea-trout, weighing at least seven or eight pounds. Down, down with the point of

the rod, and whirr, he is off again. Nevertheless, it is a last despairing effort. Good sport as sea-trout give, they cannot fight like salmon, and the first rush is generally the best. He comes up splashing and for a moment threatens to break the line with his tail, but before long, turns on his side, with fins outstretched and red gills heaving tremulously. Now is Sivert's opportunity. He darts forward, plunges into the water like a Newfoundland dog, and with unerring eye and aim, thrusts the sharp point of a gaff through his silvery sides. The next moment he is wriggling on the grass, a thin stream of blood disfiguring his shining body.

He has taken the fly well and greedily. It has to be cut out with a strong knife from the voracious cavern of his throat. We fix the hook of our weighing-machine in his gristly under-jaw and proceed to weigh him. The notch stops at seven pounds and three-quarters—not so bad for a beginning. Our spirits rise and we are eager to be at it again.

A short pause, during which the fly is washed and cleaned and a knot undone in

the casting line, and then we recommence our labours. But now, fully half-an-hour goes by. One might think there was not a single fish in the river—at all events we do not see the sign of one. The glow of exultation produced by the successful capture of our sea-trout evaporates.

First we say to ourselves, “It is high time to have another rise.” Five minutes later, with an impatient sigh, “I wish to goodness I could have another rise!” Finally, in despair, “I don’t believe I *ever* shall have another rise.”

This pretty well represents the different stages of feeling one goes through. By this time the pool is almost fished out; there are but some half-dozen casts left, and you determine that they, at any rate, shall be faultless. You concentrate every energy, and have the gratification of seeing the fly land with exquisite lightness on the very spot you intended, and of feeling it working thoroughly well.

But all your fine casting is of no use whatever. It only aggravates the situation, and something must have come to the fish,

for they are deadly sulky. The atmospheric conditions have surely changed since you commenced angling. But then, what man knows the exact atmospheric conditions approved of by the piscatorial tribe? You have caught them in rain, caught them in wind, caught them in sunshine, and on the most likely-looking days come home without a rise. If ever philosophy were required, it is needed now. But philosophy has an ugly knack of breaking down when called upon in earnest. It is a thing easier preached than practised. Thus you muse disconsolately.

Ha! what's that? A troutlet gently sucking in the fly under water? An electric thrill runs through your frame. No, by Jove! It is borne deeper and deeper with a slow but steady persistence. A breathless moment succeeds; cautiously you tighten your line. At the first symptom of resistance, off goes the fish. There is not the least doubt about it this time—the Fates have favoured you and you are into a salmon. Your pulses throb and the beatings of your heart grow louder and louder.

Eighty yards and more spin off your reel

with lightning-like rapidity before he comes to a halt. He is endeavouring to leave the pool, and is making for the fall beyond. You begin winding up with desperate haste, and put all the pressure on him that you dare, for if he gains his point he will break you to a certainty, and to lose him now would be a disappointment almost more cruel than you could bear. How heavy he feels! What a strain he places upon your arms and tackle. Thank goodness the latter is the very best that can be brought for money—good treble-twisted gut.

You succeed in reeling in about half your line. He yields it sullenly and ungraciously; then, irritated by the tension, he is off again with a mad rush. But the suspense is no longer the same. He has changed his tactics, and now tries to head up-stream. You follow as fast as you can, grasping your rod with nervous strength, now bruising your shins against some sharp boulder, anon receiving a smart slap in the face from the overhanging boughs that check your passage, again losing your foothold and splashing knee-deep into the ice-cold water. No matter; you are far

too excited to heed mere physical sensations. Every thought is concentrated on the fish, who is maintaining so gallant a struggle, for you have not mastered him yet. He still forces you to play a waiting game, and every few minutes increase the chance of losing him through some unpropitious circumstance. Until he is on the bank, gasping out his life, you cannot hold him safe.

He now proceeds to give a series of horrible short, jerky digs, each one of which fills you with alarm, for fear he should regain his freedom. These are agonizing moments, for you can do nothing to prevent them. After this he sulks until your arms and back ache and the perspiration runs down your brow. What pluck he has ; what spirit and what strength ! Will he never give in ? If this continues, you will be tired the first of the two. Another long ten minutes go by before slowly, very slowly, he turns on his side, and his broad glistening form lies for a moment revealed to vision in all its scaly beauty.

“Sivert, Sivert,” we call out in accents of delight, “he’s a twenty-pounder if he’s an ounce.”

“Yes,” comes the more sober reply. “He more dan dat ; he two, tree-and-twenty poun’ God fish—very god fish.”

But we have not got him yet.

Sivert makes a lunge with the gaff and misses him. He is in a bit too much of a hurry. The provocation to swear is something enormous. Out goes the line, and the game begins all over again. Fortunately, the prize is getting spent. Craftily and carefully we moor him in to the bank, calling anxiously to our attendant, “Vaer ikke i en hast !” Literally translated, “Do not be in a haste !”

This time Sivert makes no mistake. In another second, he has the cold steel through and through the salmon’s lithe body, and, with an upward heave, hauls him out of the water.

What a noble fellow he is to be sure ! Silvery as one of his own native “fos” (water-falls), and clean run up from the sea. As we fling ourselves on the grass by his side, we feel as if we could gaze at him for ever. Four-and-twenty pounds he weighs, all but a couple of ounces. No wonder our sinews were strained during the contest. And now



the sun shoots out suddenly and fiercely from the misty clouds, causing them to roll asunder, whilst a canopy of radiant azure takes their place. The light on the water grows intense. It renders every pebble visible in the river-bed. Fatigued by our recent exertions, we seek a sheltered nook under a quivering birch-tree, and there—with the sound of many waters murmuring a soothing lullaby in our ears, and mixing with the drone of insects, the humming of bees and the distant tinkling of sheep bells—we bring forth our modest luncheon, which we eat with good appetite and contented spirit, and say good-bye to you for the present.

## A MEMORABLE RUN.

"I TELL you, mother, that I won't marry him. I really don't see why I should, especially when I like somebody else a thousand times better. You must know that."

Mrs. Norton shrugged her shoulders impatiently, and looked at her pretty young daughter with a mingled expression of hostility and contempt.

"Your liking somebody else better has nothing to do with the matter under discussion," she said. "How often must I impress that fact upon your mind?"

"Excuse me, mother," retorted the girl, in a tone of forced composure, "but my preference counts for more than you assume."

"Tut, child. You don't dislike Mr. Sinclair?"

"Dislike him? Oh! dear, no. My sentiments are much too neutral."

"They might become warmer," suggested

Mrs. Norton, with maternal solicitude to see her offspring well settled in life.

But Phyllis was obstinate and shook her head. Evidently argument was thrown away upon her, and produced a contrary effect to that intended.

“I thoroughly appreciate the honour which Albert Sinclair has done me,” she said gravely. “He is, I suppose, the catch of the county, and I ought to consider myself lucky in having gained his approval. To be candid, mother, his proposal flatters me immensely, and gives a lift to my self-esteem. It has made me feel that, in a small way, I am a personage of importance, but——” And she stopped short, as if desirous of reviewing the situation before proceeding.

“But what, Phyllis?” demanded the elder lady petulantly. “I do wish you would be serious and not talk at random.”

“I am serious,” rejoined the girl, her clear eyes narrowing a little. “I was never more so in my life.”

“Well! I can’t think why you are so mysterious.”

“I was about to remark,” continued

Phyllis, with unruffled serenity, for she was determined not to lose her temper, although the controversy tried it considerably, "that Mr. Sinclair inspires the most profound indifference. He is rich, fairly good-looking, and not in any way offensive. In short, I am prepared to admit that he has points." And she put out one little slippered foot, and looked pensively down at its gold-embroidered toe. "The strange thing is, they don't impress me."

Mrs. Norton made a gesture of annoyance. She was of a quick and lively temperament which resented opposition.

"Why not say straight out that you are hankering after that great booby, Lancelot Markham?"

Phyllis coloured. "And if I am," she retaliated, "is it not natural? I have known Lance ever since I was a child. We have been playfellows for as long as I can remember——"

"Very likely," interrupted Mrs. Norton. "But playfellows and lovers are two totally different things."

"Mr. Sinclair is a comparative stranger,"

resumed Phyllis. "I met him in the hunting field only a few weeks ago."

"They tell me that there is no better place of introduction nowadays," said Mrs. Norton. "The men one meets are nearly always eligible and possessed of handsome means. As regards Mr. Sinclair, Phyllis, I thought you would have admired his riding."

"Perhaps I do ; but riding is far too ordinary an accomplishment to serve as a recommendation to matrimony. Nothing seems to me so absurd as for people to pride themselves on their powers of equitation."

"Lance is as poor as a rat," objected Mrs. Norton. "You and he can never marry. That's very certain."

"No," said Phyllis, in a tone of melancholy resignation. "I suppose we can't, at all events not until he has an assured income."

"Don't flatter yourself that Lancelot Markham will ever make enough by his own exertions to maintain a wife. He is an idle, selfish, lazy fellow, who throws his opportunities away. It astonishes me that you see anything in him, child."

"Is it not, perhaps, a kindly disposition of

Providence that we should remain blind to the faults of those for whom we care?" inquired Phyllis, her voice shaking a little, in spite of a strenuous effort to prevent it from betraying emotion.

"One might ask with equal truth, if it does not show defective powers of perception in the individual," retorted Mrs. Norton.

Phyllis's pretty face grew grave, and its blue eyes assumed a wistful expression. She stooped, and kissed her mother on the brow. "Don't scold me any more," she pleaded. "Of course I know that we are not rich, and that from a worldly point of view I am a fool not to accept Albert Sinclair's offer; but one is scarcely responsible for the state of one's affections, and as long as Lance fills my heart I cannot deliberately sell myself to another man. In short, I look upon matrimony without love as a hideous crime."

Mrs. Norton took out her pocket handkerchief, and pettishly rubbed the place to which Phyllis had applied her pure young lips. "Mark my words," she said, "you are throwing away the substance for the shadow.

Lance is a regular ne'er-do-weel. I heard only yesterday that he was not doing at all well at the bank, and that Mr. Fulton complained of his going out hunting so often, instead of sticking to business. Moreover, our friend Lance is a great flirt, and although you are foolish enough to imagine that he cares for you, in my opinion he would throw you over to-morrow, if he could secure a girl with money."

The red blood rushed to Phyllis's cheeks in a hot, painful wave.

"Mother!" she cried, indignantly. "Why do you say such cruel things? Is it because you wish to torment me?"

"On the contrary, child. It is because I wish to save you from ultimate misery and disillusion. Phyllis dear, you misjudge my motives. You think that I desire this marriage with Albert Sinclair solely on account of his wealth; but indeed, indeed, you are mistaken. First and foremost, I would secure your happiness. Are you not all that I have in the world since your poor father died? Is it likely that I should try to make you wretched? Come, my child, be

reasonable. Trust to my larger experience of life, my closer insight into human nature, and, at any rate, listen when I warn you against bestowing your love on one whom my instinct tells me is unworthy."

Phyllis was both touched and distressed by this speech. She felt that it was genuine, and her mother's earnest yet kindly tone made a deep impression. Nevertheless, she could not bring herself to believe any evil of Lancelot. She remembered how recently they had sat out together at a ball, and what violent love he had made to her. Other men might be deceivers, but she was morally convinced that he was an exception; else why did he always seek her out at the meets, ride by her side, and when hounds ran, constitute himself her pilot? And if he did not care for her, what inducement had he to turn his head round after every awkward fence, and ascertain if she had negotiated it in safety? No. Her mother was both a clever and a superior woman, and she entertained a great respect for her judgment, but where Lancelot Markham was concerned Phyllis opined that she suffered from that vulgar thing named



prejudice. However, there could be no harm in watching Lance, and treating him with a shade—just a shade—more reserve. All of a sudden she recalled with a pang that he had recently been showing a considerable amount of attention to Miss Gore-Stanton, a young lady commonly reputed to possess two thousand a year. Hitherto our heroine had flattered herself that she soared above so despicable a passion as jealousy, but Mrs. Norton's artful suggestion had implanted its baleful seeds within her bosom. She struggled against the thought of Miss Gore-Stanton, and told herself again and again that Lancelot's loyalty was above suspicion. *She* did not mind his poverty and the prospect of a long, dragging, indefinite engagement. At twenty one does not dwell weightily on such things, and girls, as a rule, are not nearly so worldly as their seniors, or as the majority of men believe. Romance and Sacrifice are shrines at which they cheerfully prostrate themselves. But just because Phyllis was prepared to give up much for Lance's sake, so would the least defection on his part arouse her resentment. She

could not brook a rival. He must be hers, and hers only ; precisely as she was his.

The girl's sombre meditations were dissipated on the following day, which happened to be a hunting one. She was passionately fond of the chase, and had nerves of iron. Her "pluck" was the talk of the county, and far and wide she was known as a bold and fearless horsewoman, who combined courage with skill, hands with judgment, and presence of mind. Mrs. Norton's means were slender, consequently Phyllis was not as well mounted as she deserved to be. Her favourite hunter, though a grand fencer, was thirteen years old and made a noise. Owing to this infirmity it was necessary to ease him up every hill. The carriage horse whom she frequently pressed into service was an indifferent performer and excessively slow. Still, by hook or by crook, she managed to get along. At present she was peculiarly well off, a friend having lent her a slashing four-year-old to ride and make, a task which Phyllis cheerfully undertook, regardless of the danger. As before stated, she was an uncommonly pretty girl, of the fresh, fair Saxon type. Her

figure was finely rounded in spite of its slim proportions and as straight as a young larch ; and she looked her very best on horseback. The close-fitting habit showed off her trim waist and gently swelling bust to advantage. Small wonder that Albert Sinclair, who rented the nicest hunting-box in the neighbourhood, and whose fortune was variously estimated at from twenty to fifty thousand a year, fell desperately in love with the beautiful Amazon, whom he frequently met in the hunting-field. After a month's acquaintance, his case became so bad that he applied to Mrs. Norton, being much too shy and diffident to address the young lady in person. Perhaps he felt that she had never given him any encouragement, and so deemed it wise to enlist the loved one's mother as an ally. Anyhow Mrs. Norton undertook to ascertain her daughter's sentiments, with the result already known to the reader, and hence arose the conversation which had so nearly caused friction between them.

When Mr. Sinclair overtook Phyllis on her way to the meet, and the first salutations had been exchanged, it was perhaps only natural

that the girl should look somewhat conscious and uncomfortable, and take to studying the hedgerow on her immediate right. Young Sinclair cleared his throat and for a few seconds seemed to share her embarrassment. He was an honest, healthy-looking Englishman, with a singularly kindly expression, but he lacked the rounded pillar-like throat, the noble carriage, the chiselled features, and curling chestnut locks, which are indispensable to every hero belonging to the Greek god type. He was merely a solid, squarely-built individual, with a broad back inclined to be round, a fresh complexion and two steady grey eyes. The latter were not even remarkable for their size, neither did they possess the orthodox long, dark lashes which sweep the cheek; but they looked out at the world very straightly and directly, and possessed the valuable attribute of seeing things as they were. For the rest he was a plain, honest, not outwardly handsome gentleman, such as one sees by the score, and of a type which, if not exactly calculated to take a romantic girl's fancy, makes our nation respected and respectable. Such was Albert Sinclair,

whose father, by the manufacture of pens that required no ink and produced indelible writing, had made an enormous fortune, which he bequeathed on his death-bed to his only son.

An awkward silence settled upon the two young people. While it lasted, Albert gazed admiringly at the smooth contour of Phyllis's averted cheek, noting the fineness of its texture and the delicate pink of her shell-like ear. He was very much in love ; so much so, that his passion rendered him nervous and awkward, and caused him to appear at a disadvantage. He would have given anything for his companion to break the ice, but as she showed no symptoms of doing so, and continued to stare steadily at the red berries and brown leaves, he suddenly screwed up his courage and plunged desperately into the subject so near his heart.

"Ahem ! Miss Phyllis," he said. "Ha—has your mother communicated my proposal by any chance?" He was too honest and too agitated to beat about the bush ; otherwise he might have begun the conversation less abruptly.

She coloured, and fidgeted with her reins until old Gayboy shook his head resentfully, as much as to say, "Pray leave me alone."

"Yes," said Phyllis, speaking as if the words were being dragged from her by force. "My mother informed me of the honour you have done me."

"Oh!" he exclaimed, with emotion. "For Heaven's sake, do not speak in that cold and formal manner."

"I am afraid," she said gently, feeling genuinely grieved at the pain she was about to inflict, "I am very much afraid, Mr. Sinclair, that it is not possible for me to speak in any other manner. Will you not take this for your answer, and spare us both?"

He caught his nether lip with the strong white teeth that adorned his upper jaw. He breathed hard, and then said:

"Am I to understand, Miss Phyllis, that you refuse to entertain my proposition? For God's sake," he went on hastily, seeing a shade pass over her face, "do not answer in a hurry. Perhaps I ought to have waited, I may have been too precipitate. If so, I promise not to utter another word on the subject until you

give me leave, only," with a prescience of what was coming, "only don't say no."

Poor young fellow! There was such a true ring of passion in his voice, that against her will Phyllis felt moved. She looked at him. Their eyes met, and a disturbing current travelled from his to hers. It caused the thought to flash through the secret recesses of her mind, that had she never known Lance, it was just possible she might have liked Albert Sinclair. This thought had no sooner presented itself, than she dismissed it as ungenerous and disloyal to Lance. Nevertheless there was no denying the fact that Mr. Sinclair had succeeded in removing the barrier which had hitherto rendered him an object of indifference. His personality was becoming aggressive. She could no longer ignore it as of yore. She even went the length of admitting that his eyes were nice, and that he possessed qualities for which she had not given him credit. In addition to this he had the further merit of loving her very truly and devotedly, and she would not have been a woman had she not felt a little more indulgently inclined towards him on that account.

Phyllis was not deficient in coquetry—no pretty girl ever is, but her nature was decidedly straightforward. She realised the strength of Mr. Sinclair's affection, and there and then decided not to deceive him in any particular. "He loves me," she said to herself. "And it is only right that I should be honest with him."

So she turned a flushed and troubled, but withal very sweet face to her companion's, and said :

"Mr. Sinclair, I can't express myself as I should like, but, believe me, when I say that I am sincerely grateful to you I have done nothing to deserve such love as yours. It makes me feel that I should be a very bad and a very wicked girl, did I allow you to entertain false hopes; or if I accepted you merely because you are rich, and I am poor! No, please, don't interrupt," as he tried to speak. "I could not marry you for your money, even if you wished me to do so. Marriage is an institution which fills me with awe. Nothing but love can render it bearable. Therefore, although it distresses me beyond measure to hurt your feelings, pray understand once for



all, that I never can become your wife." Her voice was low, but she spoke with an earnestness and gravity which left no doubt as to the finality of her decision. He turned deadly pale, and reined in his horse to a standstill.

"In time"—he murmured, almost inaudibly. "One never knows what may happen. People change."

"People change, but I shall not," she answered, with the confidence and rash ignorance of youth.

"I—I have no right to ask the question," he resumed unsteadily. "But tell me. Is there—is there anybody else?"

She raised her eyes to his with an effort, and then drooped them hastily, blushing meanwhile as red as a rose. The passion in him and the jealousy took fire.

"Then, by Heaven!" he cried, "I know who it is. It is that great lubberly chap, Lancelot Markham, who flirts with every girl he comes across, and who has cut me out, curse him." And he set his jaw like a very Briton.

Phillis drew herself up haughtily.

"You are mistaken," she said "Mr.

Markham has not cut you out, for the very simple reason that I have known him since my childhood, and that for almost as long as I can remember, we have been tacitly engaged to one another."

"Oh! Miss Phyllis, Miss Phyllis!" he groaned, "why did you not tell me this sooner? At least you could have prevented my making a fool of myself."

"How could I?" she rejoined, infinitely distressed. "My mother does not approve of the engagement, and refuses to sanction it. The truth is," she went on, suppressing a sigh, "mother has a great horror of poverty, not so much for herself as for me, and Lance is not able to support a wife."

"He supports a couple of hunters, doesn't he?"

"Yes," said Phyllis, with a melancholy smile. "But that is different. His father keeps them, and a wife is more expensive."

"Won't the old gentleman give his son an income?"

"No, he has too many children, and can't afford to do more for Lance than he has done already. He paid a good deal, I believe, to

get his son into the Bank. When he first went in, we were quite hopeful, but somehow nothing has come of it. The fact is," concluded Phyllis artlessly, repeating a favourite sentiment of her lover, "Lance is too much of a gentleman to work and sit all day at a horrid old desk scribbling away and doing addition sums. He has never been brought up to that sort of thing."

"And meanwhile you are fretting your heart out after a lazy scoundrel, who won't give up a single pleasure in order to secure you a home. I know a good deal more about Lancelot Markham than you do, Miss Phyllis, and don't wonder Fulton complains, and threatens to turn him out of the bank unless he mends his ways. He was only talking to me about him last night when we dined together."

Phyllis's eyes flashed fire. She sat straighter than ever in the saddle. When she spoke, her voice quivered with passion.

"How dare you talk so of Lance, and to me too, of all people in the world? I thought you were a gentleman, Mr. Sinclair, but I find I am mistaken."

"Markham is not fit to tie your shoe-

strings," said Sinclair doggedly. "You may abuse me as you like, but I am only telling you the truth."

"And are you sufficiently impartial to constitute yourself Mr. Markham's judge? Are you sure that there is no venom, no jealousy in your truth? Oh! for shame, Mr. Sinclair. I gave you credit for being a more honourable rival. Good morning. I am in a hurry." So saying she gave Gayboy a touch of the heel, and the old horse whisked his short-docked tail and cantered off at a brisk pace. Albert Sinclair watched Phyllis's retreating figure, until it disappeared from view. Then he heaved a sigh of deep depression and self-dissatisfaction.

"There is an end to all my hopes and aspirations," he murmured, beneath the fair fringe of his moustache, catching the ends and biting them viciously. "I've put my foot in it, that's very clear. Ah! me. It's a cross-grained world at best, and even money can't purchase happiness, as I'm beginning to find out to my cost. Markham's a beast, but it was bad form my abusing him. She was quite right there, and Lord! how pretty she

looked when she fired up in his defence. I wish I'd somebody to care heart and soul for me like that."

During the forenoon, he kept studiously out of Phyllis's way, and this was the easier, because, in the absence of Miss Gore-Stanton, Lancelot devoted himself to our heroine. Albert could not refrain, however, from watching the lovers. They possessed a kind of painful fascination for him, which forced him to return again and again to the post of observation. The sight of the girl's radiantly happy face stabbed his heart, and sent a thrill of envy travelling through every vein. At length he appeared to arrive at some decision, which, although difficult, afforded relief, for his countenance presently lost the sombre look which it had hitherto worn, and assumed a more gentle, resigned expression. "Yes," he muttered, as for the dozenth time he turned away. "I'll do it. She sha'n't be allowed to suffer, at any rate."

Meanwhile Phyllis and Lance seemed to find plenty to say to each other, and were completely unconscious of Mr. Sinclair's scrutiny.

Markham was a fine, athletic young man, with a magnificent figure, whose stalwart proportions presumably compensated with the fair sex for a somewhat heavy and sullen physiognomy. His eyes were good, but deep set, gleaming beneath dark, beetling brows, which gave them a furtive expression. They did not look at you straight, but conveyed an impression of secrecy and reserve. His lower jaw protruded, and the conformation of his cranium betrayed a decided preponderance of the material over the intellectual. From time immemorial delicate and refined women have admired this type of man, and succumbed to the charm of a physical strength superior to their own. To do Lance justice, as he stood by the covert side, mounted on a golden-chestnut mare with bowed forelegs, clad in all the brave array of scarlet coat and snowy leathers, he looked a fine specimen of the masculine species. A good many ladies thought so besides Phyllis; and both married and single ones smiled on him impartially.

“What has become of Miss Gore-Stanton this morning?” the girl asked maliciously.

He reddened.

"I'm sure I don't know. Gone up to London to try on a habit most likely."

"Don't you miss her very much, Mr. Markham? I wonder you are not inconsolable."

He laughed and showed his teeth, which were remarkably fine.

"Do I look like a love-sick swain?" he demanded, striving to speak unconcernedly and to appear at his ease.

"No, I can't truthfully say that you do. Nevertheless I am surprised to find how philosophically you bear her absence."

"Phyllis," he said abruptly, "you know perfectly well that I don't care two straws about Miss Gore-Stanton."

The girl quivered with pleasure, though she exclaimed in a tone of light banter:

"Indeed! Report says otherwise. It credits you with paying her a considerable amount of attention, and although I don't pretend to be exacting, still——"

"Do not badger me," he interrupted, "there's a dear. I've enough to bear as it is, without your rounding upon me."

"Why, Lance! What is the matter? Has anything gone wrong at the Bank?" she asked, with sudden anxiety, recalling Mr. Sinclair's words.

"D—n the Bank! There'll be a devil of a row there before long. I've half a mind to cut the whole business. That old ferret Fulton is making a fuss about one of the clerks in my department. Some of the accounts are wrong, and he has announced his intention of sifting the affair."

"But, Lance, that is only natural and right. Why should you object to Mr. Fulton investigating a matter which might turn out of importance?"

"Hang it all! I don't object; I'm not in a position to object. But it ain't very pleasant, Phyllis, having a fussy old fellow like that hauling you over the coals, and holding you responsible for every little mishap."

"No, of course not," said Phyllis sympathetically. "Which of the clerks is it who has been misbehaving?"

Lance raised his crop aloft, and with a dexterous switch cut off the tall purple head of a thistle close at hand.



“It’s Duncan Alister whom the old fool suspects.”

“Duncan Alister! But he is such a nice, respectable lad, is he not?”

“We are all respectable until we are found out,” said Lance grimly. “I shouldn’t be the least surprised if Fulton were to accuse *me* next. That’s why I want to cut the whole concern and be my own master.”

“Poor dear Lance! I can quite understand your feeling. But what could you do if you left the Bank?”

“Do?” he echoed with a hard laugh. “I might marry for money. Lots of men take the fatal plunge for the sake of securing the stuff.”

“Do you mean that you would deliberately marry a woman without caring for her simply to obtain her fortune?”

“How else is a poor devil to keep his head above water?”

“In some other way than that,” she rejoined indignantly. “In my opinion such an action is despicable to a degree, and cannot be too strongly condemned by all right-thinking people. If I were a man I would

sooner break stones on the road that shelter myself by means of my wife's purse. Lance, Lance! surely you are teasing me. You cannot mean what you say."

He looked at her uncertainly, then burst into a mirthless laugh.

"What a little goose you are, Phyllis, to be sure. Of course I'm only chaffing."

She heaved a sigh of relief.

"Oh, Lance, I'm so glad. Do you know, for the moment I quite thought you were in earnest, and it made me feel so miserable. But about the Bank, dear. You will not act in a hurry, will you? This present unpleasantness will probably prove but a passing cloud, and I'm dreadfully afraid you may anger your father if you throw up your situation in a hurry."

At this juncture a loud "Gone forrard away!" came travelling on the air from the other side of the covert. Conversation ceased abruptly, and Phyllis and her companion set off at full speed in the direction from whence proceeded the welcome sound. The wood was large, and the rides so deep and boggy that they were forced to make a

considerable *détour*. In consequence of having made a bad start they found themselves obliged to gallop hard. To their disappointment, when they arrived at the spot where the fox had broken covert, they had the mortification of seeing the pack some way ahead, attended by a large number of pursuers.

“What bad luck!” cried Phyllis, shading her face with her right hand, and taking a comprehensive glance around. “This comes of coffee-housing. The hounds are going at a tremendous pace. They are just breasting that hill yonder. Can you see them?” she asked, for Lance was short-sighted.

“Let us make haste,” digging spurs into the chesnut’s sides, and darting off in hot pursuit.

“Come along. There is no time to lose.”

But Phyllis did not follow, she feared the hill on account of Gayboy’s wind, and, instead of a stern chase, preferred to trust to a lucky nick. So in company with a sporting farmer, who knew every yard of the country, and some half-dozen others, she cantered down a grassy lane, and then turning sharp

to the left, jumped a stake and bound fence into a field of sound old turf. This brought them parallel with the hounds, who were running like fury on the higher ground about half-a-mile away. Suddenly Farmer Perkins reined in his young brown horse, and held a warning hand aloft.

“Hist!” he said; “they are coming our way. Don’t let us override them. If we stand where we are we shall be able to cut in fine.”

And sure enough the leading hounds were inclining to the left. Before long the whole pack swept round in a semicircle, and came streaming along the grass slopes to the right of the little band of spectators. With a crackle and a crash they forced their sleek bodies through the fences, and in a few seconds Phyllis and her companions found themselves in a more forward position than those who had got away with the hounds. Every true sportsman knows what an invigorating effect such a situation has on the spirits. Even the timid are animated by a spurious courage, whilst the naturally brave are rendered gallant almost to the verge of

foolhardiness. There is no longer any question of craning. Fate has been kind to them, and they resolve to take every advantage of the fickle goddess's favours, which are not always so generously accorded. When she beckons smilingly to us with her forefinger then we do not hesitate, for we know that she is not invariably propitious, and to-morrow we may be called upon to pay for what we receive to-day.

"Come on, Miss Norton," shouted Perkins when the hounds had raced past them. "We're in luck this time and no mistake."

Phyllis did not require much urging. She was keen for a run. Before them stretched a beautiful line of grass, flat as a billiard table, and elastic as a spring-board. She gave Gayboy his head, and the gallant old horse, cheered by the proximity of the hounds he loved so well, extended himself as if he had returned to the days of his youth, and had not an intimate knowledge of life. He justified his name, and was as gay as a four-year-old. Phyllis could feel him arch his round back as they flew a fence with a big ditch on the near side. The hoist of his strong

quarters gave her confidence. It was a pleasure to jump so cleanly and well, and the little satisfied grunt with which the good horse landed was as sweet music in her ears. For twenty minutes she knew that he could hold his own with the best of them, always provided that the ground remained level. Some days she came home in a shocking bad humour, thoroughly disgusted with herself and her mount. But on this particular occasion Reynard was kind, and displayed quite a thoughtful consideration for Gayboy's infirmity. As a rule, Phyllis was forced to nurse him, but to-day all the circumstances conspired to favour her steed. The going was light, the fields flat and strongly enclosed. Gayboy was a grand fencer, and a jumping run always suited him infinitely better than one distinguished by pace alone.

On raced the hounds, with heads held high and sterns extended straight. The number of their immediate pursuers was rapidly becoming select, and falls were frequent; for Weston Vale was notoriously big and required a finished performer. Farmer Perkins's raw material in the shape of a three-year-old

weight carrier soon succumbed to a leafy ditch, and so did many others. Gayboy's experience came in usefully. He looked before he leapt, and never made a mistake. Indeed, he was remarkable for the cleverness and precision with which he took off, seeming to know by instinct when ditches were slippery or blind. If some kind fairy could have endowed him with a new pair of lungs and a new set of legs, he would have been as near perfection as it is possible to get. But alas! there are no magic wands to wave over good old hunters when they reach the terrible stage of decline. A bullet is their truest friend.

Some such thoughts flitted through Phyllis's brain as she took a hasty glance around. On her right, Albert Sinclair was conspicuous on his grey, cutting out the work alternately with the huntsman, whilst a couple of lengths in their rear rode Sir Peregrine Cartwright, the master, followed by a small division of hard-riding men. Perkins, who for the second time managed to nick in, led on the left, and looking back, far almost as eye could reach, an attenuated line of cavaliers

stood out in dark, sinuous curves against the bright green fields. Hurrah! How the blood glowed, and the heart beat fast with glorious excitement. "Steady, old man," cried Phyllis, as Gayboy stood back well from a regular man-trap of grass and nettles guarding a stiff fence, and cleared the whole in his stride. "Bravo! that will bring some of them to grief, I'll be bound."

Crash! And the good animal following in Gayboy's footsteps came down, pitching helplessly into the field, whilst his rider, after executing a violent somersault, arose pale and dazed. People were tumbling about like ninepins. They always did when they crossed the Vale, and for once Phyllis rejoiced in the mature age of her steed, and thought how lucky it was she was mounted on the right horse, and had left the four-year-old safe and sound at home. She was, however, beginning to ask herself with inward anxiety how much longer hounds would continue to forge ahead at this breakneck pace, when suddenly a horseman appeared in a road ahead, which the Pack seemed bent on crossing. But at sight of him the fox must have turned; for



the beauties hesitated, threw up their heads, and checked. Sir Peregrine had a sharp temper, and when angry was notorious for not pausing to choose his language. In an instant he pounced upon the offender.

“D—n you, sir,” he cried, looking as if he would like to break his crop over the unlucky individual’s back, “when will you learn to ride to hounds?”

“When you learn to speak like a gentleman,” came the ready retort. The rejoinder was so quick, that it raised a laugh and completely took the wind out of Sir Peregrine’s sails, who fumed but relapsed into discomfited silence.

The run, however, was spoilt; cut short just when it promised to assume character. Both huntsman and hounds persevered, making casts in various directions, but sad to relate, they could not succeed in hitting off the line. What had become of their fox was a mystery. He seemed to have disappeared as if by magic. The day by this time was tolerably far advanced, and Phyllis resolved to go home. She looked about for Lance, but failed to descry him, and therefore made

off in the direction of Fairlands, the name of the small country town where she and her mother lived. After gaining the main road, she walked leisurely along it, in order to let Gayboy cool and recover from his exertions. Presently the sound of horse's hoofs became audible in the rear, and turning round, to her no small dismay, she saw Albert Sinclair hurrying along.

"My animal has thrown a shoe," he said, by way of apologizing for his presence, "and I'm looking for my second horseman."

"You are not likely to find him here," rejoined Phyllis cuttingly. "I recommend you to try the Whappington Road."

"Ah! yes, perhaps," he said, with an absent air. Then he pulled himself together, and added, "I'm not speaking the truth, Miss Phyllis."

"I'm perfectly aware of that fact, Mr. Sinclair. You are by no means clever at fibbing."

"There is something that I want to say to you," he said earnestly; "and so, when I saw you leaving the hounds, I followed."

“Indeed!” and her heart began to thump disagreeably, for she feared a repetition of their morning’s conversation.

“You are angry with me,” he said. “I can tell that by your tone. And I don’t wonder. I had no business to speak of Markham as I did.”

“Is it absolutely necessary for us to discuss Lance, Mr. Sinclair?”

“Yes,” he said, with gathering courage, “since it is of him—and of you I would speak. I—I’ve been thinking matters over, Miss Phyllis,” he went on, turning very red, “and the upshot of my meditations is this: I would rather secure your happiness than my own.”

“You are very kind,” she said, not knowing quite how to take this speech, or what it meant exactly.

“I watched you and Markham this morning when you were together, and—will you forgive me for saying so?—I arrived at the conclusion that you loved him very dearly.” And as he spoke, Albert Sinclair looked tentatively at his companion.

“You—you have judged rightly!” she

murmured, stooping forward and patting Gayboy's neck.

Mr. Sinclair swallowed energetically once or twice, and then resumed. "If I understand the situation aright, you would like to marry him, but are unable to do so on account of his poverty. Is that so?"

"Yes." And Phyllis's face became as a sweet red rose.

"Very well. I propose to settle on you a sum of ten thousand pounds. It is not a large fortune, but it will enable Markham to buy a partnership in some sound business. Long engagements are shocking bad things. They unsettle people and tell on their nerves. No," he continued hurriedly, as Phyllis seemed about to speak, "don't thank me; there is nothing to thank me for. All I want is to secure your happiness, even though I can only do so at the expense of my own." And he resolutely stifled a sigh.

"But, Mr. Sinclair," she cried, "this is unheard-of generosity on your part. It is downright Quixotic. Words are quite inadequate to express my deep sense of your kindness." And tears rose to her eyes. She

wiped them away and concluded, "But grateful as I feel, touched to the quick as I am, I cannot avail myself of such liberality. The thing is out of the question, and must not be thought of for one moment."

"Why not?" he demanded, "I am rich and have more money than I know what to do with. At first, no doubt, I should feel badly. Virtue is not always its own reward, as the copybook assures us. I should probably have to go round the world or something of that sort, until I got reconciled to the idea of meeting you as Mrs. Markham." They were brave words, spoken by a brave, unselfish, and self-sacrificing man, but his voice shook as he uttered them.

Phyllis gradually began to realize the depth and strength of his passion. It inspired a kind of awe, and she scarcely knew whether to pity or respect him most. She almost regretted not being able to make some return for so much devotion.

"I could not possibly take the money," she said, after a brief pause. "It is awfully good of you, Mr. Sinclair, to propose making me such a gift, and as long as I live I shall never

forget your kindness and generosity, but it would not be right for Lance and me to become pensioners on your bounty. We should forfeit our independence and also our self-respect."

"You refuse?" he said, experiencing a strong feeling of relief; for although he had forced himself to make the offer it went against the grain.

Phyllis held out her hand. "I must, dear friend."

"But you forgive me?"

"How can I do otherwise?" And her blue eyes were so humid, and looked at him so kindly and tenderly, that somehow he felt comforted.

"There's many a slip between the cup and the lip," he soliloquised. "Perhaps she may find Markham out. Anyhow I'll not give up all hope."

Phyllis was very quiet that evening. Her mother complained of her being an extremely bad companion, and declared that surely she must have some news after being out hunting all day.

"Did you see Mr. Sinclair?" she inquired.

“Yes,” the girl admitted guardedly.

“Well! And how did you get on?”

“I think,” said Phyllis, with a heightened colour, “that I have been wrong in my estimation of Mr. Sinclair. I have failed hitherto to do him justice.”

Mrs. Norton pricked up her ears at this. “Do you mean you have accepted him?” she asked joyfully.

“No; but for all that he is a true and honourable gentleman, whom any girl might do well to marry. He would make a most excellent husband. Of that I am convinced.”

“Well I never!” exclaimed Mrs. Norton as her daughter left the room. “Was there ever such a strange, unsatisfactory person as Phyllis? She says one thing one minute and another the next, until one really does not know what to make of her. I give it up as a bad job, and henceforth she must manage her own affairs.”

She felt aggrieved at the girl’s want of confidence, and either could not or would not recognize that she did not go the right way to receive it.

On the following day, whilst the two ladies

were sitting in their small but cosy drawing-room, a visitor was announced. It proved to be Mr. Fulton's maiden sister, who kept house for her brother, who was a bachelor. Generally she was self-composed and collected, but as Mrs. Norton and Phyllis advanced to meet her, it became evident that she laboured under the effects of strong excitement. Her grey hair was ruffled, her lips parted, her eyes unusually bright.

"Why, Sarah!" exclaimed Mrs. Norton—they were on very intimate terms and called each other by their Christian names—"whatever is the matter with you?"

"Oh! my dear," gasped Miss Fulton in return, sinking down on a sofa close at hand, and untying her bonnet strings with thin, trembling fingers, "I'm in a shake all over. I'm so upset and so astonished, that if it were my own son I could not feel more badly about the business than I do."

"What business? You speak in parables."

"Such a dreadful thing has happened at the Bank," said Miss Fulton, wiping her face with a silk pocket-handkerchief. "In all my experience—and if it pleases God to let me



live, I shall be fifty-six next birthday—I can never remember so sad and painful an occurrence taking place.”

Phyllis drew closer to Miss Fulton’s side. Her eyes were dilated and there was a vague terror in them.

“Are you talking about Duncan Alister?” she inquired.

Miss Fulton looked at the fair, anxious face and her own grew wonderfully tender. She was a kind-hearted woman though a bit of a gossip.

“No, my poor child. Duncan Alister is as good a lad as ever stepped. Whatever put him into your head?”

“Lance told me yesterday—” began Phyllis, an icy chill stealing about her heart.

“Lance told you a pack of lies, no doubt,” interrupted Miss Fulton. “Listen to me, child. I’m terribly sorry for you in the whole matter, but I cannot help thinking it better that you should learn the truth through a friend, rather than through a stranger who might break it abruptly.”

“No one could accuse *you* of breaking it abruptly, Sarah,” observed Mrs. Norton,

sarcastically. "I don't believe you've got anything to tell."

"Haven't I, though?" rejoined Miss Fulton. "Only I don't want to see poor dear Phyllis here falling down in a faint."

At these ominous words the girl turned deadly pale. Her limbs trembled so violently, that she had to place her hand on the back of a chair to prevent herself from falling. "If Lance is ill," she faltered, "pray do not keep me in suspense."

"He is not ill," returned Miss Fulton, gravely. "It would be a hundred thousand times better for him in every way if he were."

"Then," stammered Phyllis, "wh—what is wrong?"

"Sit down, my dear," said Miss Fulton, taking the girl by the hand, and forcing her to assume a seat on the sofa by her side. "You will want all your strength—all your courage."

"Come, Sarah, speak out, and have done with innuendoes," interposed Mrs. Norton, severely. "If Lancelot Markham has got himself into a mess, I for one am not surprised, for I always predicted that he never would do any good at the Bank."

“Unfortunately, Jane, your prediction has turned out only too correct. But I must begin at the beginning. Well, then, for some time past, my brother has detected little inaccuracies in the accounts. Small sums, too, have disappeared, varying from one to five pounds. There was evidently a thief somewhere, and suspicion fell upon Duncan Alister, chiefly through certain hints let drop by Mr. Markham. To my mind, that is the worst part of the whole business. However, to proceed, the irregularities continued, but my brother found a difficulty in obtaining proof. A few mornings ago, a cheque for twenty pounds was returned to the bank, as discredited. It bore Charles’s signature, but the handwriting was not his, although it closely resembled it. He saw at once that a forgery had been committed, and telegraphed up without delay to London for an expert versed in caligraphy. Unknown to them, the handwriting of every individual connected with the bank was submitted to a searching examination, with the result that young Mr. Markham’s guilt was established beyond a doubt.”

"I don't believe it," cried Phyllis, clenching her small fists. "Nothing will ever make me believe that Lancelot was capable of such an action."

"He has admitted his crime to my brother, and thrown himself upon his mercy," continued Miss Fulton, "which was the wisest thing the unfortunate youth could do, since Charles has decided, out of consideration for his old friend, Mr. Markham, senior, to hush up the affair and not proceed legally against the offender, provided he retires immediately from the Bank. The difficulty is to keep Lancelot's family in ignorance of the transaction, and yet account for his retirement."

Here was a terrible state of affairs. Phyllis felt as if a bombshell had burst under her feet. She could not rest until she had seen Lance, and heard the story from his own lips; for, however much appearances might be against him, she refused to believe that his admission to Mr. Fulton was genuine. "He might have taken the blame, just to save Alister," she mused, seeking to find an excuse for the man she loved. After a few minutes'

thought, she resolved on a step from which her maidenly modesty would have shrunk on any ordinary occasion. Lance occupied lodgings in the town, close to the Bank where he was employed. She made up her mind to walk to them, there and then, and obtain an interview. It was only under the influence of strong excitement that she reconciled this proceeding with her sense of propriety. She had a chaste pride, which made her think that no woman should run after a man; but the thought of Lance miserable, Lance in trouble and disgrace, appealed with irresistible force to her sweet, compassionate nature. Let the world say what it liked, she could not let him suffer without seeking to succour and comfort him. So she put on her hat and jacket, and stole out unknown to Mrs. Norton. Five minutes' rapid walking, and she arrived at her destination. An untidy maid-servant, with a dirty print frock and a shock of unbrushed hair, showed her up stairs and into the room where Lance Markham was sitting, brooding before the fire, his head resting on his hands, his eyes gloomily dwelling on the bright

flames that leapt up the chimney. As the door opened, he looked round irritably. A flush of shame dyed his swarthy cheek crimson, when he perceived who his visitor was. Phyllis's presence filled him with a sense of guilt and self-abasement. He would rather she had kept away. Before she spoke a word, she seemed to him like an accusing angel, who made his crime appear doubly bad.

"You here!" he exclaimed nervously. "What the deuce have you come for? I wish to goodness people would leave me alone."

She flung herself on the rug at his feet, and encircled his knees with a pair of loving arms.

"Lance," she cried, "my poor dear injured Lance. I have come to tell you that I don't believe a word of this terrible charge. It does not matter a little bit, dear, what other folk think and say, so long as you and I know that the accusation is unfounded." And she looked up at him with tender entreaty, whilst the tears started to her eyes.

But the young man's face remained

clouded as before. Her words brought no smile, no sign of relief. An agonizing terror took possession of her. She began to lose faith in him, to feel her courage and belief slipping away like unstable things without foundation.

“Lance,” she murmured, almost inaudibly, “for God’s sake tell me that it is not true—that you did not sign the cheque.”

Still he sat silent and motionless, and his silence gave confirmation to her fears. She uttered a sharp cry—a cry destined to haunt him in the years to come—and shrank back. The action was involuntary and purely instinctive, but, with the capricious temper of one whose soul is heavy with guilt, he resented it as a personal injury.

“Am I not miserable enough and down-trodden enough already?” he asked fiercely, his eyes flaming with a lurid light, as he turned them full upon her. “Is it necessary for you to come here and upbraid me with your airs of innocence and superiority?”

“Oh! Lance,” she said, aghast that her motives should be so misunderstood, “nothing was further from my intention.”

“I don’t want your pity or anybody’s pity, for the matter of that,” he went on excitedly. “When a man is tempted and falls, every one immediately does his utmost to push him a little deeper into the pit. It is part of that delightful thing called human nature.”

“Are you not unjust, Lance? You seem to think that your best friends are set against you, and indeed—indeed you are making a mistake.”

“I wish to God I were. Why should all this fuss be made about a beggarly twenty pounds? I never meant to steal the money, Phyllis. I only meant to borrow it, and then pay it back somehow later on. I happened to be desperately hard up”—he could not tell her that his purse had been drained by a beautiful young lady belonging to the Gaiety chorus—“and I thought there was no particular harm in taking a loan. My misfortune consists in having been found out, and now I suppose I am done for, and everybody will cut me in the county.”

She stole softly back to him, and held out her arms. The gesture was full of feminine protection and infinitely winning.



“Not everybody. Lance dear, I am terribly shocked and pained. I can’t pretend to be otherwise, but I love you, and when a woman really loves a man there is nothing that she won’t forgive, save desertion. We are young and if we put our shoulders resolutely to the wheel, in time we shall live this terrible affair down. We must not expect to find things easy at first. We are sure to have difficulties to contend with, but do not lose heart. I will help you, and stick to you through thick and thin. If we are true to each other, we may be happy yet.”

He crimsoned before the gaze of her sorrowful eyes, which were full of divine compassion. Perhaps in his heart he felt how unworthy he was of her, and how even at that moment he was acting a lie and cruelly deceiving her. His better nature stirred within him.

“You are a good girl, Phyllis, and I only wish you *could* help me, but you can’t. Unfortunately for us both, you’ve got no money.”

“Do you think of that even at such a time as this?” she asked sadly. “Then, indeed,

your love must be slight, and different from what I imagined."

"I've got to live," he said sullenly. "You seem to ignore that important fact altogether. And who will employ a person with no character and credentials?"

"Have you any plans for the future, Lance? Why not emigrate and begin a new life in a new country? I will come with you if you like."

At length she had broken through the crust of his hardness and cynicism. With sudden passion he took her in his arms, and kissed her so fiercely, so often, that she felt like a little frightened, fluttering bird. Her heart beat wildly against his great chest. Ah! what mingled pain and pleasure there was in a love like theirs. She had been so proud of him, and now, although her affection remained, her respect had vanished. It was pitiful to think of. His lips left a stain on her cheek. They were no longer pure. There was corruption in their touch. How could she be sure of him in the future? The man who could forge his employer's name might commit any other crime with equal

facility. What a horrible thought to intrude between lovers, to poison their caresses and take all the sweetness from their embraces!

"Let me go, Lance; let me go," she panted, quivering, and humiliated. "Oh! this is too bad."

"Phyllis, do you believe that I love you?"

"I don't know. How should I know? All I do know is that we love in different ways." And again she struggled to regain her freedom.

"Perhaps you may be right, but I love you." Kiss. "I love you." Kiss. "I love you." Kiss, kiss, kiss. "Never believe otherwise."

Then he flung her from him rudely, almost violently, and added, "Go now. I can't stand much of this. It will drive me mad. You are the dearest and best girl in the world, and I am a poor unhappy wretch, with a pleasure-loving temperament and a weak disposition, who hates and despises himself; but in the future think of me as kindly as you can. And, Phyllis——"

"Yes, dear, what is it?"

"Now and again when I am far away,

remember that I am very miserable and say a word for me at prayer-time. God, if there be a God, may listen to you when He won't to me. Besides I am not fit to address Him."

"Lance," cried the girl, frightened by a certain wildness in his manner, "I cannot bear to leave you in this state."

"It will not be for long," he rejoined. "I haven't the smallest intention of hanging on in the old diggings and letting people point the finger of scorn at me."

"Thank God for that. You are not in a frame of mind to stay here alone."

"I am not going to. I shall have a companion soon, a companion who will probably bore me infinitely and fill me with regrets."

"How strangely you look and speak. Can't you go home to your father? At least you would have some one to talk to."

"No, I've made other arrangements. It is too late to alter them now. Good-bye, Phyllis. Give me one last kiss."

"Good-bye, Lance." And then, of her own accord, she put up her flower-like face

to his, and pressed her warm young lips against his cheek.

And so they parted ; she—with his bitter, unsatisfactory speeches still ringing in her ears, and he, retaining through all time, the recollection of the heights to which a woman's trust and devotion can attain.

“If only I were worthy,” he muttered to himself when she had gone. “But I'm not, and so perhaps things are best as they are.”

The following day, Fairlands was fairly electrified to hear that Lancelot Markham had eloped with Miss Gore-Stanton. The event was entirely unlooked for, and, as may be imagined, it descended with stunning force on Phyllis.

“I was right, you see,” said Mrs. Norton triumphantly. “I always said that that young man was a brute, and did not really care for you.”

“Mother,” said Phyllis. “Please grant me a favour. Never abuse Lance in my hearing and oblige me, if possible, by refraining from all mention of his name. He is to be pitied, and Miss Gore-Stanton is to be pitied, and so am I. That is all I can say.”

And that was all Mrs. Norton could ever get out of her, though she tried very hard to learn her daughter's views on the subject.

So the winter passed away, and Spring came with budding leaves, green grass, sweet odours and clear sunshine ; and with it appeared a subdued and sober Phyllis in the hunting field. The last day of the season arrived, before she elected to grace hounds with her presence. Possibly the long abstinence from her favourite amusement caused her to bring to it fresh zest ; anyhow, never had she ridden so hard as on this particular day. A pair of watchful grey eyes noted the fact with solicitude, and sought to ascertain whether it augured well or ill for the future. During the long winter months, Albert Sinclair had seen a good deal of the girl. She always welcomed him with a smile, and his company seemed to produce a soothing effect. She treated him as a friend, and he was careful not to disturb their relationship by a second declaration of affection. In short he behaved admirably, proving his devotion by acts and studiously refraining from words calculated to give offence. Needless to say,

he was very unhappy all this time, but yet he never lost hope. He had a firm ally in Mrs. Norton, and whenever Phyllis's back was turned they talked the matter over. They did not dare allude to it in her presence, for in these days they were both a little afraid of her and regarded her as an enigma.

"You may depend upon it," Mrs. Norton would aver, "that when a girl has two lovers, one of whom treats her badly, the other well, she is certain in her own mind to draw comparisons between them. And once Phyllis begins to compare your behaviour with that of Lancelot Markham, the conclusion she will arrive at is inevitable. What she suffers from now is wounded pride not love."

This line of argument was very consoling to our friend Albert, but when month after month passed and Phyllis gave no sign, he began to feel terribly impatient and unsettled. "I'd rather risk a quarrel than go on in this lukewarm sort of way," he mused discontentedly. It was a great relief, therefore, to see her come out hunting again, looking more like herself. There was no resisting the

influences of the sun, the verdant spring, and the cheering sight of horse and hound. When a stout old dog-fox broke covert and set his grey mask for the open, the pink in Phyllis's delicate cheek deepened, her lips parted in a smile, and the brightness and sparkle came back to eyes which looked as if they had shed many a tear of late. And what a run they had that day! On every side it was pronounced the best of the season. An hour and a half over glorious grass and fair flying fences, all of them jumpable, yet amply big enough to choke off the shirkers, and only a couple of insignificant checks. Such sport soon dissipates dull care, making it appear like a brooding and unhealthy monster. Grief depends a good deal on the circulation. When the blood runs warm in the veins it vanishes, giving place to more cheerful thoughts, fresh hope. With an inward feeling of relief and thankfulness Phyllis realized that the cloud had rolled away which for so long had darkened her mental horizon. The chains which had held her captive were broken, and she was once more a free woman, ready to love and be loved. Her spirits went



up with a rush. She was a new creature. The black spectacles of the Past fell from before her eyes, and the Future, smiling and gay, offered a rose-tinted pair in their place. What were fences of twigs and thorns compared with the one she had successfully overcome? Nothing would have stopped her this morning. She seemed absolutely insensible to danger, and—rare distinction for a lady—actually led the field great part of the way. She was mounted on the four-year-old, who, thanks to quiet schooling and riding about, had come on wonderfully, and he carried her like a bird. True, once or twice he made a mistake, but being quick on his legs, on each occasion he was able to keep upright. And how delightful was the sensation to one accustomed to ride screws of steering a really sound animal, who could breast the hills like a lion, did not care whether the ground were as hard as iron, and required little or no nursing. The fortunate people with large studs often don't realize how their poorer neighbours are handicapped. But the good four-year-old had nearly shot his bolt, and there was not an animal within a

mile of him who did not show symptoms of distress, for they had run quite out of their country.

“Tallyho! tallyho! yonder he goes,” rang out at length, bringing relief to many an anxious horseman. The hounds burst into a chorus of murderous music, which put fresh spirit into the weary horses, causing them to cock their ears and make renewed exertions. Most of the field clattered through a village after the now sinking fox, but the huntsman, wishing not to lose sight of his hounds, jumped a fence to the right. Phyllis followed him, only to find that they were separated from a canal by a few feet of ground. The huntsman was greatly excited, and determined on this magnificent run ending in blood. He could see pug swimming in the water, and cheered on the hounds. Then, without a moment’s hesitation, in he plunged. The gallant animal he bestrode swam across, his rider holding on to the mane whilst a hundred yards ahead poor Reynard gave up his life to his canine foes, who rolled him over handsomely, and clamoured loudly over his poor, stiff, mud-stained body.

“Hold hard, Miss Phyllis, for God’s sake!” cried an agonized voice. But the warning came too late.

Phyllis thought that what was possible for the huntsman was possible for her. “In she plunged boldly, no matter how coldly,” into the canal. The young horse did not like the job. He turned restive, tried to stop, then his legs gave way from under him, and he and his fair rider disappeared from vision. Although Phyllis knew how to swim, the combined weight of her habit and boots prevented her from making any use of the accomplishment. The water gurgled down her throat, blinded her eyes, and invaded her ears. Oh! this was horrible, worse—suffocating. Should she die thus, drowned like a rat just when the love of Life was strong within her breast? Oh, merciful Heaven! what did people on dry land mean by saying that drowning was an easy death? It was awful—agonizing. . . .

Suddenly she felt herself seized by a pair of strong arms, which drew her to the surface. She gasped for breath and the welcome air came back into her lungs.

That grim ghost Death receded into the shadowy distance, and lost all power, as her rescuer drew her to the bank. She no longer felt frightened. Those muscular arms inspired a sense of wonderful rest and protection.

“Oh! Phyllis, my darling, my darling,” cried Albert Sinclair, his face all working with emotion. “Are you alive?”

She looked up at him and smiled.

“Yes, I think so. I don’t feel like dying just yet, any way.”

The smile and the words made his heart beat fast.

“Phyllis,” he whispered, bending down until his lips were almost level with her wet ear, “I have been very patient. Won’t you let me hope?”

She flushed from throat to brow.

“You must give me time,” she faltered, ashamed of appearing to yield too easily, yet with a happy thrill running through her veins.

“Time!” he echoed, his grey eyes shining with triumph. “How much do you want?”

She rose to her feet, and, all damp and

dripping as she was, made him a playful curtsy.

"I don't know, sir. That is for you to find out. All I do know is that most things come to those who wait."

"I have waited so long."

"Yes," she said mischievously. "I began to think that you never would ask me again."

He looked at her incredulously.

"Phyllis! You don't mean to say that things were like this? Then indeed I have been blind." And in his rapture he tried to steal his arm round her waist.

She gave a happy little laugh, and evaded him.

"Yes, sir, curiously, stupidly blind; but, as this memorable run seems at last to have opened your eyes, I'll say no more."

THE END.

# **MATTHEWS'S**

Purified Specially for the  
Nursery and Toilet.

For the Face.

For the Hands

**PURIFIED**

To Protect the Skin.

To Heal Chafes.

# **FULLER'S**

To Preserve the Complexion.

For Roughness and Redness

For Sunburns and Freckles

# **EARTH.**

For Sore Feet.

IN BOXES 6d. and 1s. FROM ALL CHEMISTS & STORES.

---

USED IN THE ROYAL NURSERIES

---

## **Chas. Southwell & Co.'s 'EXCELSIOR' TABLE JELLIES**



These Excellent Jellies are put up in neat cardboard boxes in three sizes:—Half-pint, Pint, and Quart, and the only preparation needed is simply to dissolve the contents of each Packet in the measure of water specified on the directions for use, and directly it is set there is at once a handsome Jelly ready for the table.

The cost of these Packet Jellies is nearly a quarter the price usually paid for the ordinary Bottled Jellies, and many households consider them much superior and a greater delicacy than the old style.

PREPARED ONLY BY

### **CHAS. SOUTHWELL & CO.,**

*Wholesale and Export Manufacturers of Jams and Marmalades, Bottled Fruits and Confectionery, LONDON, S.E.,*

20 HIGHEST AWARDS.



The Modern "Judgment of Paris,"

[Paris Exhibition, 1889.]

ONLY GOLD MEDAL.



Pears' Soap

The only Gold Medal ever awarded

SOLELY FOR TOILET SOAP

at any INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION in the world

*Representing the consensus of opinion of  
more than*

100 Analysts or Soapmakers,

the chief Experts of the world.

Coughs

Colds

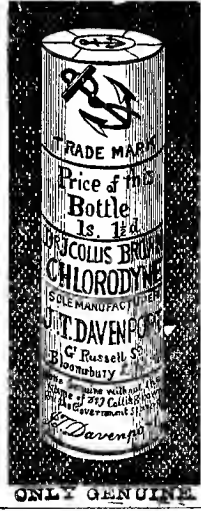
Asthma

Bronchitis

Toothache

Neuralgia

# DR. J. COLLIS BROWNE'S



## CHLORODYNE

ORIGINAL AND

IS THE GREAT SPECIFIC FOR CHOLERA, DYSENTERY, &c.

**C**OUGH, COLDS, ASTHMA, **B**RONCHITIS.

**D**IARRHŒA, DYSENTERY, &c. GENERAL BOARD OF HEALTH LONDON REPORT THAT IT ACTS AS A CHARM ON GASTRIC AFFECTIONS. DR. GIBBON, Army Medical Staff, Calcutta, states: "2 DOSES COMPLETELY CURED ME OF DIARRHŒA."

**D**R. J. COLLIS BROWNE'S CHLORODYNE.

—Dr. J. C. BROWNE (late Army Medical Staff) DISCOVERED A REMEDY TO DENOTE WHICH HE COINED THE WORD CHLORODYNE. Dr. Browne is the SOLE INVENTOR, and, as the composition of Chlorodyne cannot possibly be discovered by analysis (organic substances being dissolved in it), and the formula has never been published, it is evident that any statement to the effect that a compound is identical with Dr. Browne's Chlorodyne must be false.

This Caution is necessary, as many persons deceive purchasers by false representations.

**D**R. J. COLLIS BROWNE'S CHLORODYNE. Vice-Chancellor Sir W. PAGE WOOD stated in evidence before the Select Committee that Dr. J. COLLIS BROWNE WAS UNDOUBTEDLY THE INVENTOR OF CHLORODYNE, that the whole story of the defendant Freeman was deliberately untrue, and he regretted to say it had been sworn to. — See *The Times*, July 13th, 1864.

Diarrhœa

Cholera

Dysentery

Fevers

Ague

Spasms

Etc.

We have never used any other form of this medicine than Collis Browne's, from a firm conviction that it is decidedly the best, and also from a sense of duty we owe to the profession and the public, as we are of opinion that Collis Browne's is a deliberate breach of faith on the part of the chemist to prescribe and patent alike. — We are, Sir, faithfully yours, SYMES & CO., *Members of the Pharm. Society of Great Britain, His Excellency the Viceroy's Chemists.*

**D**R. J. COLLIS BROWNE'S CHLORODYNE IS THE TRUE PALLIATIVE IN

NEURALGIA, GOUT, CANCER, TOOTHACHE, RHEUMATISM.

**D**R. J. COLLIS BROWNE'S CHLORODYNE is a liquid medicine which assuages a PAIN OF EVERY KIND, affords a calm, refreshing sleep, WITHOUT HEAD-ACHE, and INVIGORATES the nervous system when exhausted.

**D**R. J. COLLIS BROWNE'S CHLORODYNE rapidly cures short all attacks of

EPILEPSY, SPASMS, COLIC, PALPITATION, HYSERIA.

**I**MPORTANT CAUTION.—THE IMMENSE SALE of this REMEDY has given rise to many UNSCRUPULOUS IMITATIONS. Be careful to observe Trade Mark. Of all Chemists, 1s. 12d., 2s. 6d., and 4s. 6d.

SOLE MANUFACTURER, J.T. DAVENPORT, 236 T. Russell St. W.C.





BROOKE'S

*Monkey Brand Soap*

**FOR SCRUBBING KITCHEN TABLES AND FLOORS.**

The World's most marvellous Cleanser and Polisher. Makes Tin like Silver, Copper like Gold, Paint like New, Brass Ware like Mirrors, Spotless Earthenware, Crockery like Marble, Marble White.

**SOLD BY GROCERS, IRONMONGERS AND CHEMISTS.**

EDMOND EVANS, ENGRAVER AND PRINTER, RACQUET COURT, FLEET STREET, LONDON, E.C.

